







LES TRAVAILLEURS DE LA MER

THE  
TOILERS OF THE SEA

BY  
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AUTHOR OF "LES MISÉRABLES," "NOTRE DAME," ETC. ETC.

*ILLUSTRATED*

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## PREFACE.

THERE are three battles to be fought by man : Religion, Society and Nature. These three conflicts are, at the same time, three urgent needs. To believe, there must be a church; to create, there must be a city; and to live, the ship and the plough are necessities.

But these three solutions comprise three conflicts. The mysterious difficulty of life, crops up in all three of them.

Human nature has to contend with obstacles under the forms of superstition, prejudice, and the elements. A triple necessity weighs us down—the necessity of dogma, the necessity of law, and the necessity of matter. In his work, “Notre Dame de Paris,” the author has denounced the first; in “Les Misérables,” the second, and, in the present work, he points out the third.

To these three fatalities, which environ the life of man, is joined one more—an internal one—the supreme desire of the human heart.

HAUTEVILLE HOUSE,

March, 1866.



## DEDICATION.

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I DEDICATE this work to the Rock of Hospitality and Liberty to that old corner of Normandy inhabited by a noble seafaring race—to the Island of Guernsey. Rough, but kind; my present refuge, and, probably, my future tomb.

V. H.



# THE TOILERS OF THE SEA.

## BOOK I.

### *HOW A BAD REPUTATION IS GAINED.*

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### WRITTEN IN THE SNOW.

THE Christmas in Guernsey, in 182., was one worthy of mention, for on that day the snow fell. In the Channel Islands a severe winter is such a rare occurrence that a fall of snow is looked upon as quite an event. On that Christmas morning the road that runs above the beach, leading from Saint Pierre Port to Valle, was all white with the snow, which had commenced falling at midnight, and had not ceased until the break of day. About nine in the morning, as it was too early for the churchgoers to be on their way to the parish church of Saint Sampson, or for the Wesleyans to be proceeding to Eldad Chapel, the road was very nearly deserted. In that portion of it, between the first and second towns, there were only three persons, a man, a woman, and a child. They were all three at some distance from the other, and there was evidently no connection between them. The child, who was about eight years of age, had stopped, and was looking anxiously at the snow. The man was walking some hundred paces behind the woman, and both had come from the direction of Saint Sampson. The man was still young, and appeared to be something between a workman and a sailor. He wore his everyday clothes, a jersey of a rough brown material, and waterproof gaiters—a dress which showed that, in spite of the sanctity of the day, he had not come out for the purpose of attending any place of worship. His heavy shoes of untanned leather, the soles of which were studded with

huge nails, left on the snow an impression more resembling the lock of a dungeon than the print of a human foot.

The woman was evidently dressed in her Sunday best. She wore a quilted silk mantle; underneath it she had on a coquettishly made dress of Irish poplin, with pink and white stripes, and, but for her red stockings, might have been taken for a Parisian woman. She moved with a light and careless step, and from it you might easily guess that she was a young girl who had not yet experienced any of the toils or troubles of life. Her every movement betrayed that half-concealed pace which marks the most delicate of all transitions—the budding of the girl into ripe womanhood, like two twilights melting into one—the commencement of the woman and the end of the child.

The man did not appear to notice her. All of a sudden she stopped by a clump of oaks, at the corner of a field, and seemed to reflect for a moment; then she stooped, and wrote something with her finger upon the snow.

This movement on her part attracted the man's attention. Then she raised herself up and proceeded on her way at an accelerated pace, looking round with a smile, and, turning sharply to the left, disappeared down a lane with a hedge on each side of it, which led to the Chateau de Lierre. As she turned round, the man recognised her: she was Déruchette, one of the prettiest girls in the neighbourhood. He felt no inclination to hasten on, but in due time he found himself at the clump of oaks at the corner of the field. The girl had already passed away from his thoughts, and there is no doubt that if a porpoise had risen in the sea, or a redbreast flitted from the hedge, that he would have continued on his way, with his eyes fixed on the redbreast or on the porpoise; but, by chance, his eyes were cast upon the ground, and his looks fell mechanically upon the spot where the girl had made a stop.

There were the prints of two little feet, and in front of them he read the word that she had traced in the snow:

*"Gilliatt."*

It was his own name.

He was called Gilliatt.

For a long time he remained motionless, looking at the name, the tiny footprints, and the snow, and then, half sadly, he proceeded on his way.

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## CHAPTER II.

## LE BU DE LA RUE.

GILLIATT lived in the parish of Saint Sampson, where he was far from being popular. There was a reason for this, however. In the first place, he lived in a "haunted house." In the country portions of Jersey and Guernsey—sometimes even in the streets of the towns—you come across a house the entrance to which is completely blocked up. Holly-bushes barricade the door, whilst ugly planks are nailed across the windows. The glass in the casements of the upper storeys has all been shattered, and the frames look gaunt and hideous. In the back yard, the grass has sprouted thickly between the stones, and the parapet of the wall is broken away in many places. If there happen to be a garden round it, it is overgrown with nettles, thorn-bushes, and poisonous plants; whilst insects of strange form and appearance abound in it. The chimney-stacks seem ready to fall, and in many places the roof has given way. The glimpse that you catch of the rooms through the shattered casements show a scene of ruin and desolation; the woodwork is worm-eaten, and the stone decayed. The paper hangs down from the wall in long strips, one overlapping the other, and disclosing the various periods at which they have been affixed. Here are the arabesques of the Empire, the crescent-shaped patterns of the Directory, and the balustrades and pilasters of Louis XVI. Long pendant cobwebs, choked up with innumerable flies, show the long and undisturbed empire of generations of spiders. Fragments of broken crockery can occasionally be noticed on the shelves. It is not unreasonable to suppose that such houses may be haunted; indeed, it is currently believed that the Prince of Darkness pays them nocturnal visits.

Houses resemble their inhabitants, and can, as it were, die. A breath of superstition is the destruction of a dwelling; then its aspect is terrible.

These weird-looking abodes are by no means rare in the Channel Islands; all agricultural and seafaring classes have great faith in the active agency of Satan.

Those of the Channel Islands and of the adjacent shores of France have very deeply-rooted superstitions on the subject. Satan has his emissaries all over the earth. It is a well-known fact that Belphegor is the ambassador from Pandemonium in France, Hutgin in Italy, Belial in Turkey, Thaumuz in



Spain, Martinet in Switzerland, and Mammon in England. Satan is as good an emperor as another Satan Cæsar! His household is extensive and well arranged. Dagon is his purse-bearer; Succor Benuth, the chief of the eunuchs; Asmodeus presides over games of chance; Kobal looks after the theatres; Verdelet is the master of ceremonies; Nybbas is his jester; Wierus, a very learned man, and a great authority on demonology, calls Nybbas, the "great parodist."

The Norman fishermen of the Channel take a number of precautions before putting to sea, on account of the many tricks that Satan plays upon them. For a long time it was believed that Saint Maclou inhabited the great square rock of Ortach, which is situated between the Island of Aîrigny and the Casket rocks; and many veteran mariners of former days were ready to assert that they had seen him sitting down reading in a book. Therefore, sailors, as they passed, were in the habit of dropping on their knees until the day when the report was found to be entirely false. Now, every one knows that, so far from being a saint, it was an evil spirit that inhabited the rock of Ortach, named Jochmus, and that for several centuries he had the audacity to pass himself off as Saint Maclou. The Church has more than once suffered from these delusions. The demons Raguhel, Oribel, and Tobiel were looked upon as saints until the year 745, when Pope Zecharias found them out and struck them off the calendar. In order to detect the black sheep, it is necessary to be thoroughly acquainted with demonology in all its ramifications.

The former inhabitants of these parts relate that in bygone times, the Roman Catholics of the Norman Archipelago were, in spite of themselves, in closer connection with Satanic influences than the Huguenots. Why this should have been the case it is out of our power to say; but there can be no doubt that much annoyance was experienced by the minority, from this source. Satan had evidently a weakness for the Catholics, which has given rise to the opinion that the Devil is more Catholic than Protestant. One of his most unbearable tricks consisted in paying nightly visits to married Catholics, at the moment when the husband was fast asleep, and the wife just dozing off, which gave rise to many unpleasantnesses. Patouillet, indeed, asserted that Voltaire owns his existence to one of these Satanic visits. There is an air of probability in this; besides, the truth has been openly acknowledged, and is referred to in the form of exorcism, under the head of "*De erroribus nocturnis*

*et de semine diabolorum.*" Such events were particularly prevalent at Saint Helier towards the close of the last century—no doubt, as a punishment for the crimes of the Revolution, for the evils resulting from revolutionary excesses can hardly be estimated. However it may have come to pass, there is no doubt that the chance of a nocturnal diabolical visit, at a time when it is impossible to see distinctly, was a source of much embarrassment to orthodox ladies; for the idea of bringing a Voltaire into the world was by no means a pleasant one. It is related that one lady applied to her confessor for a method of finding out whether any imposition was being practised upon her. He replied: "To make sure that it is your husband, and not an evil spirit, put your hand upon his head, and if you find no horns there, you may be sure that all is right." But the good lady did not find this test satisfactory.

Gilliatt's house had been haunted, but, though it was no longer so, it was regarded with great suspicion. No one is ignorant that when a wizard takes possession of haunted premises, Satan considers that he has put in a caretaker, and has the courtesy not to call in again, unless, of course, he is summoned, as a medical man might be.

This house was named Le Bu de la Rue, and was situated on a small tongue of land, or rather of rock, having a little anchorage on the creek of Houmet Paradis. At this spot there is deep water. There was no other house upon the point, and it was surrounded with just sufficient land for a small garden, which was sometimes inundated at high tides. Between Saint Sampson and Houmet Paradis is a steep hill, on the summit of which is a castellated building overgrown with ivy, known as the Castle of Vale, or the Chateau de l'Archange, so that from Saint Sampson the Bu de la Rue cannot be perceived.

Wizards are not rare in Guernsey. They carry on their profession, in spite of the present spread of education. Some of their doings are really too terrible; they boil gold, they pluck herbs at midnight, and cast the evil eye upon their neighbour's cattle. When they are consulted in cases of illness they send for bottles containing "water of the sick," and have been seen to shake their heads and mutter, "This water looks bad." In the month of March, 1857, one of them discovered seven devils in a bottle of water of this description.

Everyone is afraid of them. One recently cast a spell upon a baker and his oven, another had the wickedness to seal up, with great care, envelopes, inside which there was nothing; another

went further—he had on a shelf in his house three bottles labelled “B.” All these terrible facts can be proved. Some wizards are most benevolent, and, for a fee of two or three guineas, will take upon themselves any illness from which you may be suffering; then they roll about upon the bed, uttering loud cries, whilst you say, “Dear me, I feel quite well!” Others, again, cure you by tying a handkerchief round you—a remedy so excessively simple that it is a wonder no one found it out before. In the last century the Royal Court of Guernsey used to burn them alive, now they give them eight weeks’ imprisonment—four weeks on bread and water, and four weeks’ solitary confinement.

*Amant alternū catenæ.*

The last burning of a wizard in Guernsey took place in the year 1747. The municipal authorities used one of their squares, the Carrefour de Bordage, for this purpose. Eleven were burnt between the years 1565 and 1700. In general, the culprits avowed their guilt; most of these confessions were extorted by torture. It was not only sorcerers that were burnt in the Carrefour de Bordage: both society and religion used it for other purposes. Heretics were burnt there. In the reign of Mary Tudor a mother and her two daughters were burnt; the mother was called Perrotine Massy. One of the daughters was *enciente*, and was confined in the very midst of the flames. A contemporary chronicler says “Son ventre éclata.” The newly-born infant rolled beyond the flames, and a man, named House, picked it up, but the Bailiff, Hélier Gossilin, like a good Catholic, ordered it to be thrown into the fire once more.

### CHAPTER III.

#### FOR YOUR BRIDE.

LET us return to Gilliatt.

The neighbours said that, towards the end of the great Revolution, a woman, with a little child, came to live in Guernsey. She was English, unless, indeed, she was French. Her name, through Guernsey pronunciation or country orthography, was finally converted into Gilliatt. She and the child lived quite alone; some said it was her son, others her nephew; whilst a third report was that it was a child that she had adopted. She had just sufficient means to live on. She bought a small piece

of ground at La Sergentée, and another at La Roque Crespel, near Roquanis. At this time the house of Bû de la Rue was haunted. For over thirty years no one had inhabited it, and it was falling to ruin. The garden, continually inundated by the tide, was practically useless. But, in addition to this, strange noises were heard, and lights seen in the house after dark. There was another strange peculiarity in the house: if anyone would in the evening place upon the mantelshelf a ball of worsted, a few needles, and a bowl of soup, in the morning they would discover the soup eaten and a pair of mittens knitted ready for wear. The house, with its familiar spirit, was offered for a few pounds. The woman, evidently tempted by the Devil, became the purchaser, and took up her abode there with the child. From that time all supernatural noises ceased. "The tenant is suited to the house," said the neighbours. No lights were now to be seen, save the tallow-candle of the owner. "A witch's candle is as good as the Devil's torch," and this saying satisfied the public. The woman cultivated the few acres of land that she possessed, and bought a cow of the kind whose milk produces yellow butter. She gathered white beans, and potatoes of the species known as Golden Drops. Like other people, she sold her parsnips by the barrel, onions by the hundred, and beans by the *dénere*.\* She did not herself go to the market, but entrusted her crops to Guilbert Falliot, at the sign of the "Drinking Pond," at Saint Sampson, to sell for her. Falliot's books show that at one time he sold for her as much as twelve bushels of the best early potatoes.

She had had some cheap repairs done to the house, sufficient to render it weather-tight, and the rooms only leaked when the rain was exceptionally heavy. The house consisted of two bedrooms and a parlour, with a loft above. The loft was reached by a ladder. The woman looked after the house, and taught the child to read. She attended no place of worship, and, taking this into consideration, people declared that she must be French. Not to go "anywhere" is a serious matter. It is very likely that she was French. Volcanoes cast out stones, and revolutions disperse mankind. Families are removed to great distances; citizens are turned out of their country, and scattered here and there. People fall, as if from the clouds, in Germany and England; some even go as far as America; and the inhabitants of the country are astonished at them. Whence come all these unknown people? It is the volcano blazing with the fires of revolution

\* A measure peculiar to the Channel Islands.

that has vomited them forth. These individuals, driven out and expelled from their native land, may be likened to human aerolites; they are called refugees, emigrants, adventurers. If they remain they are just tolerated; if they go away, everyone is pleased. Sometimes these poor pilgrims—the women especially—are absolute strangers to the events which have led to their exile, and are helpless and astonished at the persecution to which they have been subjected. They settle down just as they can. They have never done anyone an injury, and cannot comprehend why so cruel a fate has befallen them. I have seen a little tuft of grass hurled into space by the explosion of a mine. That mighty upheaval, the French Revolution, scattered many far and wide.

The woman, whom the Guernsey people called the Gilliatt, was, perhaps, one of these waifs and strays.

The woman increased in years, and the boy became a young man. They lived a solitary life, shunned by all, but they were happy in each other's society. "The sho-wolf will lick her own cub"—this was another of the kindly sayings of the neighbourhood; but as the youth grew up to manhood, the mother—as the bark falls from an ancient tree—died. She left him the field at Tuguitée, called Roque Crespel, the house at Bû de la Rue, and, in addition, as the official inventory said, "one hundred guineas in an old stocking-foot." The house was sufficiently furnished with two oaken chests, six chairs, two beds, a table, and crockery, and kitchen utensils. There were some books upon a shelf fixed against the wall, and a leather trunk, which had to be opened when the inventory was taken. It was of a buff colour, and was ornamented with nails in pateras, and small tin stars. It contained a complete wedding outfit, perfectly new—all made of the finest Dunkirque linen—chemises, petticoats, and a few pieces of silk for dresses. Upon a scrap of paper was written, "For your bride." The young man suffered terribly from the loss of his mother. He had never attempted to mix with his neighbours, and he now sedulously avoided them. He lived as though in a desert; it was no longer isolation, it was perfect solitude. When two live together life is possible; but when left entirely alone, it seems as if existence can be no longer continued. We cease to care for anything, and abandon every effort—it is the first sign of despair. As years glide by, however, we find that duty is but a series of abnegations. We gaze on our life, we think of our death, and we bend ourselves to fate; but as we yield we feel that the very blood is drawn from our heart.

But, after all, Gilliatt was young, and in time his wound healed. Sorrow does not dwell long with youth. Little by little his grief wore itself out, and melted away in the scenes that surrounded him. Nature drew him further from mankind and nearer to herself; and his soul grew more and more accustomed to the solitude in which he lived.

## CHAPTER IV.

### PREJUDICE.

As we have before said, Gilliatt was not liked by his neighbours. There was nothing unnatural in this antipathy, for there was ample reason for it. In the first place, there was the house that he occupied; then there was his doubtful origin. Who was the woman? and what was the child? A rustic population does not appreciate a mysterious stranger who comes among them without any explanation. Then his dress was that of a workman; and yet, though not rich, he had enough to live on without doing anything. Then there was his garden, from which he managed to draw profit, in spite of storms and high tides; and, again, the big books that he kept on a shelf, and occasionally pored over. And there were many more reasons. Why did he lead this solitary life? The *Bû de la Rue* was a kind of hospital, in which Gilliatt lived in quarantine. The neighbours considered it a natural thing that they should be astonished at his solitary life, and hold him responsible for society keeping aloof from him. He never went to church or chapel, and was often out during the night. He talked to wizards. Once he had been seen sitting down on the turf, with an expression of astonishment on his face. He was in the habit of wandering round the Druidical monuments at Ancresse, and frequenting the fairy grottoes in that neighbourhood. He had been seen to bow to the *Crowing Rock*. He was ready to buy as many birds as people would bring him, and, after paying for them, he would let them free. He was always civil to those he met in the streets of Saint Sampson, but would avoid them if he had the opportunity. When he went out fishing he always brought back fish. He had a set of pipes which he had purchased from a soldier of one of the Highland regiments which are sometimes quartered in Guernsey, upon which he played after nightfall upon the

rocks on the sea-shore. He had been seen making gestures with his hand, as though he were sowing seeds. How can a parish expect to get on with a man like that in it?

Then there were the books that he had inherited from the dead woman; surely here was cause for legitimate suspicion. The Reverend Jacquemin Hérode, the rector of Saint Sampson, had, at the time of the woman's burial, read the titles of some of them. There was "Rosior's Dictionary;" "Candide," by Voltaire; "Advice to People Regarding Their Health," by Tissot. A French gentleman who had sought refuge in Guernsey from the terrors of the Revolution remarked, "That is most likely the same Tissot who carried the head of the Princess of Lamballe on the point of a pike."

His reverence had also remarked that one of the books had a terribly suspicious title, for it was termed "De Rhubarbaro."

Let us hasten, however, to remark that the book, as its title shows, was written in Latin, and that, therefore, the odds are that Gilliatt—who did not understand the language—had not read the work in question. But it is exactly for those very books that a man does not peruse that he is condemned. The history of the Inquisition has proved this to us. Besides, after all, it was only a treatise on rhubarb, written by Dr. Tilingius, and published in Germany in 1679. There was also a suspicion that Gilliatt prepared powders and unholy potions; certainly, bottles had been seen in his possession. Why did he walk about the cliffs in the evening, especially at midnight, unless it was to meet the evil spirits who wander on the sea-shore enveloped in vapour.

Once he had assisted an old woman, named Moutonne Gahy, known as the Witch of Torteval, to extricate her cart from the mud.

When a census was taken he had described himself as "*A fisherman, when there are fish to be caught!*" Just put yourself in the place of Gilliatt's neighbours, and think how you would like such a reply.

Wealth and Poverty are mere terms of comparison. Gilliatt had some meadows and a house. Compared with those who had nothing, he was well off. One day, in order to try him, or perhaps even to make an advance—for there are women who would marry Satan himself if he had money—a girl asked Gilliatt when he contemplated taking a wife. His reply was, "I shall take a wife when the Crowing Rock takes a husband." This Crowing Rock is a large mass of stone, standing upright, in the centre of

a field belonging to Mons. Lemezurier de Fry. There is something uncanny about this piece of rock. No one knows what it is there for. Occasionally a cock is heard crowing, when no such bird is visible—a very disagreeable occurrence. It has been stated that the cock was placed in its present position by the Sarregousets—a goblin race, the same as the Sins. When there is a nocturnal thunderstorm, and you see shapes of men flying through the lurid haze of the atmosphere, or amidst the driving billows of cloud, they are the Sarregousets. There was a woman, who lived at Grand Mielles, who knew them well. One night there was a large meeting of Sarregousets at the junction of four roads, and she cried out to a waggoner, who had lost his way, “*Ask these people which is your road; they are good folks, always civil, and ready to oblige.*” You might lay a wager that this woman was a witch.

James I.—that wise and learned monarch—was in the habit of boiling women of this class alive, and then, tasting the water in which the operation had been performed, would say, “*This was a witch,*” or “*This was not one,*” as the case might be. It is much to be regretted that the kings of the present day have not that talent, otherwise we could see some use in royalty.

There were, therefore, strong reasons for suspecting that Gilliatt lived in a perfect atmosphere of witchcraft. Once, during a midnight storm, he was alone at sea in his boat, near to the Sleeping Rock, and he was then heard to ask:

“Can I get through the channel?”

Then a voice from the cliffs answered, “Steer boldly.”

Who was he talking to if it was not to someone who answered him. This seems a clear proof. On another stormy night, near the Catiau Roque, a double reef of rocks, where witches, goats, and supernatural beings of all kinds meet for a dance on Friday, it is believed that Gilliatt’s voice was recognised joining in the following awful dialogue:—

“How is Vesin Brovard?” (Vesin Brovard was a mason, who had fallen from the roof of a house on which he was at work.)

“He is getting all right.”

“*Ver dia!* Why, he fell from a greater height than yonder rocks. It is pleasant to think that he was not smashed to atoms.”

“The good folks were lucky last week at the gathering of seaweed.”

“Yes, luckier than they were to-day.”

“Ah! well there won’t be much fish in the market to-morrow.”

“No, it blows too hard.”



"They will never be able to get the nets out."

"How is Catherine?"

"She is flourishing."

Catherine was doubtless a Sarregouset. There can be but little doubt that Gilliatt did a good deal of his work by night. At times he was seen pouring water on the ground from a pitcher. Now, water thrown on the earth takes the appearance of a devil. On the road to Saint Sampson, not far from No. 1 Martello Tower, are three large stones, taking the form of steps. On the uppermost one, which is now bare, there had formerly been a cross, or it might have been a gibbet. These stones have a very bad reputation. Very honest people, whose statements are to be entirely depended on, assert that, close to these stones, they have seen Gilliatt talking with a toad.

Now, there are no toads in Guernsey.

Guernsey has the monopoly of vipers, and Jersey of toads, so that this toad must have swam over from Jersey to have a talk with Gilliatt. The conversation appeared to be a very friendly one. There can be no doubt of these facts, and the proof is that the stones are still there. Anyone who has any doubts on the matter can go and see them. Not far off is a small house, from the corner of which hangs a board, upon which may be read:

*"Dealer in cattle, dead or alive; old rope, iron, bones, and chewing tobaccos. Every attention given to customers, and cash payments."*

A man must be a perfect infidel to deny the existence of these stones and house. All these facts injured Gilliatt's character very much.

It is only very ignorant persons who are unaware that one of the principal dangers in the Channel waters arises from the King of the Auxeriniens. No ocean spirit is more to be dreaded than he is. Whoever sees him is sure to be wrecked between one Saint Michael or the other. He is of small stature, for he is a dwarf; he is deaf, for he is a king. He knows the name of every drowned man, and the places where their remains are lying. He is thoroughly acquainted with the burying grounds of the Ocean. His head is broad at the bottom, and narrowing up to a point at the forehead; short, square body, very fat, warts all over his head, long arms and long legs, no feet, but fins, hands ending in huge talons; in short, a ghastly fish, with a human face. To get rid of him, he would have to be exorcised, or else caught in a net, but, in the meantime, he does a great deal of harm. Nothing is more unlucky than to catch a glimpse of him.

There can sometimes be seen, amongst the waves and breakers, or half-hidden behind the density of the sea-fog, the features of a hideous creature, low forehead, flat nose, huge ears, an immense mouth, full of broken teeth, bushy eyebrows, and large glaring eyes. He changes his colours, too; when the lightning is most vivid he seems to be scarlet; when it is of a milder form, he appears to be of a ghastly white. He has a stiff, square beard, from which the brine is always dripping, and has a sort of fin like a tippet, ornamented with fourteen shells, seven in front and seven behind. These shells have greatly puzzled the conchologists. The King of the Auxcriniers is only visible in bad weather. He is the precursor of storm and tempest. His appalling form is seen in the mist and rain and hurricane. Scales cover his body, like a coat of mail. His figure is seen amongst the waves, which fly before the breath of the tempest, and twist like the shavings beneath the plane of the carpenter. Sometimes he raises himself entirely above the foam, and if he sees on the horizon any ships in distress, his face brightens up with a hideous smile, and he dances for joy, with movements at once uncouth and terrible. There will be no luck for those who come across him during their voyage. At the time when Gilliatt was occupying the attention of the good folks of Saint Sampson, the last persons who had seen the King of the Auxcriniers, asserted that he had now only thirteen shells on his dress. What, then, had become of the fourteenth? Had he given it to any one? No one could answer for certain, and nothing was left to them but conjecture. One thing is sure, and that is that Mons. Iupin Mabier, of Godaines, a gentleman of position, and a land-owner, paying rates and taxes, was ready to take his oath that he had once seen a singularly shaped shell in Gilliatt's hands. When two countrymen met it was not uncommon to hear a conversation like the following:—

"This is a fine ox, is it not?"

"It is, neighbour."

"So it is, though I say it myself."

"There is more tallow than meat on him."

"Are you sure that Gilliatt has not cast the evil eye on him?"

Sometimes Gilliatt would stop by the side of a field where the men were at work, or by a nursery ground when the gardeners were attending to their business, and would utter these mysterious words:

"When the Devil's Bit flowers, cut your winter crop of rye."  
(The Devil's Bit is the Scabwort plant.)

"The ash is in leaf : there will be no frost."

"Summer solstice is near : the thistle is in flower."

"No rain in June, the wheat will turn white ; have a care of blight."

"The berries are on the wild cherry-tree ; distant the full moon."

"If the weather on the sixth day of the new moon is like that of the fourth, or of the fifth day, it will be the same nine times out of twelve in the first case, and eleven times out of twelve in the second, throughout the month."

"Avoid neighbours who go to law with you. Beware of evil influences. The pig that drinks warm milk will burst. Rub a cow's teeth with leeks, and she will not eat any more."

"The smelts have begun to spawn ; look out for fevers."

• "Frogs are making their appearance ; sow melon seed."

"The liverwort is in flower ; sow barley."

"The limes have begun to bloom ; mow the grass."

"When tobacco is in flower, shut up the hothouses."

• And the worst of it all was, that those who followed his advice found that it was correct.

One evening, when he was playing the pipes in the sand-hills by the coast of Demi de Fontenelle, the mackerel fishery failed. Another evening, at low tide, a cart loaded with sea-weed upset just in front of his house. Doubtless, he was afraid of being taken before the magistrate, for he took great trouble in getting it up again, and reloaded it with his own hands.

A little girl in the neighbourhood was covered with vermin. He went expressly to Saint Pierre Port and brought back some ointment, with which he rubbed her. Gilliatt effected a complete cure, and therefore Gilliatt must have brought about the misfortune.

For everyone knows that, by casting a certain spell, you can cover anyone with vermin. There was a rumour that Gilliatt was in the habit of looking into wells. This is a dangerous practice, when one possesses the evil eye, and it is an established fact that at a house near Saint Pierre Port, the water in a well turned putrid. The good woman to whom the well belonged said to Gilliatt, "Look at this water," and showed him a glassful of it ; Gilliatt allowed that the water was thick. Upon this the woman, who had her suspicions, said, "Cure it for me, then."

At once Gilliatt began to question her. "Had she a stable ? had the stable a drain ; and whether the gutter did not pass close to the well ?"

She answered in the affirmative, and Gilliatt, going into the stable, opened out the drain, and turned its course, upon which the water became sweet again. The neighbours might think what they liked: the water in a well does not change from bad to good all at once, and the whole affair was most mysterious. In point of fact, it was hard to believe that Gilliatt had not cast a spell upon the water. Once he went on some business to Jersey, and it was remarked that he had taken lodgings in the Rue des Alleurs. Now, *alleurs* signifies supernatural beings.

As is the custom in country places, all these pieces of evidence are collected together, and from them the neighbours derive their estimate of a man's character.

One day Gilliatt was seen bleeding at the nose. This was a serious matter. The master of a vessel, who had almost circumnavigated the globe, declared that, amongst the Tunigusians, wizards always bled at the nose; therefore, when a man does so, you know what to think of him. Some persons, however, endowed with reasoning powers, remarked that the wizards amongst the Tunigusians might not have the same characteristics as those of Guernsey. He was once seen to go into one of the meadows belonging to the Huriaux near Saint Michael, on the main road to Videctlins. Directly he got into the field he began to whistle, and first came a crow, and immediately afterwards a magpie. This fact was witnessed by a very worthy man, who has since held an important parochial office.

At Hamel, in the parish of l'Eperie, there were some old women who positively asserted that at early dawn they had heard a number of swallows crying out "Gilliatt, Gilliatt!" Add to all these facts that he was a cruel man.

One day a poor fellow was beating his donkey. The beast would not move on; the poor man, who wore wooden shoes, gave it a few kicks in the belly, and the donkey fell down. Gilliatt ran to assist in putting it on its legs, but it was dead. He then gave its owner a severe beating.

Another time a boy was coming down from a tree, with a brood of unfledged birds in his hand, which he had just taken from the nest. Gilliatt took them away from him, and punished his ill-nature so far as to climb the tree again and replace them in their nest.

Some of the neighbours who saw the occurrence reproached him for his cruelty to the boy, and, in reply, Gilliatt pointed out the parent birds, who were fluttering around the empty nest

and uttering shrill cries of anguish. Gilliatt had a weakness for birds—a sure sign of a wizard.

The children of the neighbourhood took great delight in robbing the nests of the gulls and other sea-birds in the cliffs. They took from them large quantities of blue, yellow, and green eggs, which they strung, and festooned over the mantlepieces. As the cliffs are very steep, fatal accidents sometimes occurred. Nothing is prettier than a screen ornamented with sea-birds' eggs. But when there was an act of ill-nature to be done Gilliatt was always ready, and, at the risk of his life, would climb the cliffs, and put there straw figures, old hats, and all manner of scare-crows, to deter the birds from building their nests, and the children then had, of course, no object in scaling the cliffs. For these and a few more reasons Gilliatt was disliked throughout the neighbourhood. Is it a thing to be wondered at?

## CHAPTER V.

### MORE BAD TRAITS IN GILLIATT'S CHARACTER.

BUT there was one point which public opinion had not decided regarding Gilliatt.

Generally, he was looked upon as a Marcou, but some persons went so far as to believe that he was a Cambion. A Cambion is the child of a mortal woman, and a supernatural being.

When a woman has seven male children consecutively, by the same husband, the seventh is a marcou, but the birth of a girl, which breaks the series, destroys the spell.

A marcou has the mark of the lily imprinted upon some portion of his person, and has the power of healing scrofula and skin diseases, like the Kings of France. There are many marcous in all parts of France, especially in the district of Orléans. Every village of the Gatinais has its own marcou. To cure a patient the marcou has only to breathe on the affected part, or to allow them to touch his lily mark. The most propitious time for healing is on the night of Good Friday. Two years ago there was a marcou at Ormes in the Gatinais, who was nicknamed "the Handsome Marcou," and consulted by all the inhabitants of Beauce. His real name was Foulon. He was a cooper by trade, and had a cart and horse. The gendarmes had to be called in to prevent his working his miracles. The mark of the

lily was under his left breast. It is in various parts in other marcoues. There are marcoues in Jersey, Aurigny, and Guernsey. There is, no doubt, some connection between them and the rights that France exercises over the Duchy of Normandy, or else how can you account for the lily? In the Channell Islands there are many persons who suffer from scrofulous maladies; hence the presence of marcoues. Some of the country folks who watched Gilliatt bathing in the sea imagined that they saw the mark of the lily; but when they questiond him about it, he only laughed in their faces. For he laughed at times just like an ordinary man. From that day, however, no one detected him in the act of bathing, as he only did so in lonely and dangerous spots; most likely at night, by moonlight, which rendered the performance highly suspicious. Those who persisted in believing him a son of the Devil were evidently in the wrong. They should have known that there are hardly any Cambions, except in Germany; but, fifty years ago, there were plenty of ignorant people in the Valley of Saint Sampson.

For it requires an extraordinary amount of credulity to believe that a son of the Devil exists in Guernsey.

For the very reason that he was disliked, Gilliatt was consulted by a great number of people. In fear and trembling the peasants came to talk to him about their maladies. Their fears generated confidence, and, in the country, the more the doctor is believed to be allied with the powers of darkness the more faith is put in his prescriptions. Gilliatt had various recipes confided to him by the dead woman, which were entirely at the service of those who applied for them; but he would receive no money for this service.

He cured whitlows by herb-poultices. The contents of one of his bottles was a sure febrifuge. The chemist of Saint Sampson, or rather *pharmacien*, as we Frenchmen term him, thinks that this remedy was simply an extract of quinine. Those of his detractors who were possessed of a few generous feelings allowed that Gilliatt acted the part of a good spirit to the sick when only ordinary remedies were in question. But when he was applied to as a marcou he would do nothing, or listen to no one. If anyone suffering from scrofula asked permission to touch his lily he would slam the door in his face. He absolutely refused to work any miracles, which is an act of sheer absurdity on the part of a wizard. I do not recommend taking up the business of a sorcerer, but, if you do so, act up to your profession.

There were one or two persons who did not share in the general

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prejudice against him. One of these was *Sieur Landoys*, of *Olos-Landes*, parish clerk of *Saint Pierre Port*, and registrar of births, deaths, and marriages. *Landoys* was very proud of his descent from *Pierre Landais*, the treasurer of *Brittany*, who was hung in 1485. One day *Sieur Landoys*, whilst bathing, swam out to sea further than was prudent, and was very nearly being drowned. *Gilliatt* plunged into the water, and, at the risk of his own life, brought him to land. *Landoys*, from that time, never said anything against *Gilliatt*. When anyone, in surprise at his conversion, made any remark on the matter, his answer always was: "*Why should I dislike a man who, so far from injuring me, has rendered me an important service?*"

The clerk was a man entirely free from prejudice. He had no belief in witchcraft, and ridiculed those who were afraid of ghosts. He had a boat of his own, in which he often went fishing during his leisure hours, and he had never seen anything extraordinary except once, when he thought he perceived a woman in white robes rise from the sea; but even of this he could not be certain. *Moutonne Gahy*, the witch of *Torteval*, had given him a little bag, which, tied under the cravat, shielded the wearer from evil influences. He ridiculed this bag, vowing that he was ignorant of its contents; but, for all that, he wore it, and seemed more at ease when it was round his neck. A few bolder spirits followed *Sieur Landoys'* lead, and discovered some good points in *Gilliatt's* character. For instance, he was very temperate, and never touched either tobacco or gin, so that at times this meed of praise was given him: "*He neither drinks, smokes, chews, or snuffs.*"

But temperance requires other good qualities to back it up, and public feeling was against *Gilliatt*.

At any rate, even as a *marcou*, *Gilliatt* might have rendered the community great services. Upon a certain Good Friday, at midnight—the day and hour which custom had decided was most propitious for the operation—all the sufferers from *scrofula* in the island, either by inspiration or mutual arrangement, assembled in front of the *Bû de la Rue*, and, exhibiting their scars and sores, with clasped hands entreated *Gilliatt* to heal them. But he refused, and then everyone knew what a wicked man he was.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## THE DUTCH BOAT.

THIS was the sort of man that Gilliatt was.

The girls said that he was ugly.

But he was not ugly. Some people might have called him handsome: his profile was of a classical type. Whilst at rest it was something like the Dacian carved in the column of Trajan. His ear was fine and delicate, with no lobe to it, but well adapted for hearing. The strongly-marked vertical line between his eyes proved the courage and perseverance of his disposition. There was a depression in the corners of his mouth which gave him a slightly cynical expression. His brow was round and lofty. His eyes were clear and expressive, though in them could be detected that involuntary movement which fishermen contract from gazing at the rippling waters. His laugh had all the pleasant ring of boyhood in it. His teeth were whiter than the purest ivory; but exposure to the air had bronzed his skin to the tint of a Mulatto. One cannot brave the ocean, the tempest, and the night, with impunity. At thirty years of age he looked forty-five. The wind and the waves had given him a complete mask.

They had nicknamed him "Artful Gilliatt." In an Indian fable we find that Brahma one day asked Strength "What is stronger than thee?" and Strength replied, "Cunning is." A Chinese proverb says, "What could not the lion do, if he had but the instinct of the monkey?" Gilliatt was neither a lion or a monkey, but his deeds proved the truth of both fable and proverb. Though his height and strength were not greater than that of others, by more knack he was enabled to raise weights which might have made a giant hesitate, and to accomplish tasks which would have taxed the powers of an athlete.

He was a natural gymnast, and was perfectly ambidexter.

He never used a gun, but was an inveterate fisherman; he spared birds, but not fish. There is no pity for the dumb. He was an excellent swimmer.

Solitude either cultivates men's intellects or else makes them idiots. Gilliatt at different times betrayed symptoms of both. There were moments when his features wore an expression as of an intellectual void, such as is seen on the features of an uncultured savage; whilst at others the fire of mental superiority gleamed from his eyes. The Chaldees of past ages had men of this



calibre, in whom the dulness of the shepherd occasionally opened out and showed the vast acquirements of the man of genius.

And yet he was only a poor man—only knowing how to read and write. It is probable that he was balanced upon that line which separates the dreamer from the thinker. The thinker wills, the dreamer yields to the force of circumstances. Solitude forces itself more deeply into a pure nature, and moulds it, in a certain degree. Unconsciously, such a nature becomes imbued with a feeling of sacred awe. The shadow which shrouded Gilliatt's mind was composed of two equal parts, both of them obscure, and yet widely different; within, all was ignorance and weakness; without was mystery and power. From his almost daily scrambling over the rocks and scaling the cliffs; from his going and coming between the different islands of the Archipelago in all weathers; from sailing any species of craft that he came across; from venturing by night, as well as by day through the most dangerous channels—without deriving any benefit from it, but from simply following his own will and fancy—he had made himself a perfect seaman.

He was a born pilot; a true pilot is a man who knows the depths of the ocean as well as he does its surface. The waves are an outer problem, continually changing, from submarine formations taking place in the seas in which the vessel is cruising. It seemed, when you watched Gilliatt steering through the shallows and the reefs of the Norman Archipelago, that he carried in his brain a map of the bottom of the sea: he knew it thoroughly, and braved its dangers.

He was better acquainted with every buoy than the cormorants that used to perch upon them; the slight differences which distinguished one from the other, the four stakes that marked the buoys of Creux, of Alligande, of Tremies, and of Sardrette, were as clear and distinct to him in the thickest fog as in the brightest day. He never for an instant hesitated between the apple-headed buoy of Anfré, nor the iron trident that surmounted that of La Rousse; the white ball of La Corbette was as plain to him as the black ball of Longue Pierre; and there was no risk of his confusing the cross of Goubeau with the sword driven into the ground at La Platte; nor the hammer-headed buoy of Barbées with the swallow-tailed one of Moulinet. His profound knowledge of seamanship was clearly proved when one of those marine tournaments called regattas took place. One of the feats to be performed was to take a fore-and-aft rigged boat from Saint Sampson to the island of Herm, and to bring her back again.

The distance is about a league each way, and the feat was to be performed without assistance.

To navigate a fore-and-aft rigged boat, is a thing which every fisherman can accomplish, and, so far, the feat did not appear to be a hard one; but here is where the difficulty came in. The boat to be used was one of those heavy old-fashioned craft with bluff bows, built at Rotterdam, which sailors of the last century termed, in their sea slang, "*Dutch Paunches*." Nowadays we occasionally meet with one of these built after the old Dutch model—low in the water, and rounded, having two outriggers on the port and starboard sides, which can be raised alternately, according to the direction of the wind, and which supply the absence of a keel. Secondly, the return from Herm was to be made with a heavy cargo of stone. In the trip there the boat was to be empty; on her return she was to be loaded. The prize was the boat itself, which was to be handed over to the winner. This craft had been used in the pilot service, and the pilot who had sailed her for nearly twenty years was one of the strongest sailors of the Channel; and since his death no one had been found capable of managing her; and it had been therefore decided to make her the prize at the regatta. The vessel, though she was not decked, had many good qualities, and was a tempting bait for a thorough sailor. Her mast was stepped rather forward, which increased the draw of her sail; this had another advantage, for the mast was not in the way of lading. She was a strong, solid craft, rather heavy, but very roomy—a good sea-boat, and thoroughly serviceable. There was a great deal of rivalry for the possession of her; the work was heavy, but the prize was a valuable one. Seven or eight of the strongest fishermen in the island entered their names as candidates for the prize. Each had his turn, but not one could get as far as Herm. The last competitor was celebrated for having rowed across the Channel, between Sark and Brecq-Hou, in heavy weather. Bathed in perspiration, he brought back the boat, exclaiming, "It cannot be done."

Then Gilliatt took his turn, and, seizing the oar, he put out to sea; then, instead of lashing the boom, which would not have been prudent, and without letting it swing entirely free, which gave him command of the sail, and letting the boom move with the wind without absolutely drifting, he steered the boat with his left hand. He made Herm in three-quarters of an hour. Three hours afterwards, though a strong wind got up from the south, blowing right across the roadstead, the boat,

steered by Gilliatt, re-entered Saint Sampson laden with stone; and, out of bravado, he had added to the cargo the little bronze gun belonging to Herm, which the inhabitants of that island were in the habit of firing every year on the fifth of November, as a token of rejoicing for the death of Guy Fawkes. Guy Fawkes, I may remark, has been dead two hundred and sixty years, so people have been rejoicing for a long time. Gilliatt, though deeply laden, and having the Guy Fawkes' cannon in his boat in addition to the other cargo, and the south wind a-beam, brought back the heavy boat safely to Saint Sampson.

When Mons. Lethierry saw this, he shouted out, "You are a sailor—every inch of you," and he held out his hand to him.

We shall have something further to say of M. Lethierry presently.

It was decided that Gilliatt had won the boat. But his good fortune did not make people look upon him any more favourably.

Some persons declared that they were not surprised at the result, as Gilliatt had hidden in the boat a branch of the wild medlar; but this was never proved.

From that day Gilliatt sailed no other boat except the old craft that he had won. It was in this heavy boat that he went out to fish; he moored it in a snug little anchorage that he had all to himself, under the very walls of his house in the *Bû de la Rue*. At nightfall he would fling his nets on his back, and, passing through his garden, climb over the wall built of rough stone, and, springing from rock to rock, jump into the boat and away to sea. He caught large quantities of fish, but people declared that the branch of wild medlar was always somewhere in the boat. Nobody had seen it, but everyone believed in it.

When he had more fish than he wanted for his own use he gave them away to the poor—he did not sell them. The poor did not feel any gratitude to him, for they remembered the branch of wild medlar. It is unfair to play tricks with the sea.

He was a fisherman, but not a fisherman only; he had, by instinct, and to fill up his time, taught himself three or four trades. He was a cabinetmaker, a smith, a wheelwright, a boat-caulker, and, besides these, he knew something of engineering. No one could mend a wheel better than he could; he manufactured all his own fishing-tackle. He had fitted up in one of the rooms of the *Bû de la Rue* a miniature forge, with anvil and all complete; and, as his boat had only one anchor, he had entirely, without assistance, made another. It was an excellent one. The ring was of the proper strength, and

Gilliatt, without instructions from anyone, had found the exact measurements for the stock, so as to prevent the flukes from turning over. He had removed all the nails in the planking, and substituted rivets, so that the holes could not be enlarged by rust. By these improvements he had made his craft much more seaworthy, and he profited by this to make occasional trips to some sequestered little islets, like Chousoy, or the Caskets. Then people said, "There is Gilliätt, off again!" But this was an occurrence that gave no feelings of pain to anybody.

## CHAPTER VII.

### DREAMER IN A HOUSE OF DREAMS.

After all, Gilliatt was but a dreamer; this might account for his courage, and also for his timidity. This disposition united the characteristics of the hallucinationist, and the visionary; hallucination may inspire a peasant like Martin as well as a king like Henry IV. Sometimes the unknown reveals itself on a sudden to the mind of man. A momentary rent in the shadow allows what has hitherto been invisible to be seen for an instant, and then closes over it once more. Such visions sometimes change the destinies of those to whom they are revealed. They convert a camel-driver into a Mahomet, and a breeder of goats into a Jeanne d'Arc. A certain amount of Divine inspiration is frequently engendered by solitude. It is the smoke that rises from the burning bush. A strange mixture of ideas is the result, converting the seeker after knowledge into an all-seeing sage, and giving to the poet the gift of prophecy. By this we arrive at the mysteries of Horeb, Cedron, Ombos, the maddening intoxication derived from chewing the laurels of Castalia, and the revelation of the month of Busion. We begin to comprehend Pelëia at Dodona, Phémonœ at Delphos, Trophonius at Lébaëa, Ezekiel on Mount Kebar, and Saint Jerome in the Thebaid. Too often the state of visionary exultation overwhelms and stupifies the man. Sacred stupefaction has, and does exist. The Indian Fakir carries about with him the burden of his hallucination, as the Cretin does his *goitre*; Luther, holding converse with the devils, Pascal masking the mouth of hell with his screen; the negro Obeah man talking with the god Bossum of the white face, all display the same characteristics, only

differing by the varied intellects through which they have passed. Luther and Pascal were, and still remain, giants, whilst the Obeah man is a mere idiot.

Gilliatt did not soar so high or sink so low; he was a mere dreamer. He took an unusual view of nature. Many times when the sea was perfectly calm and transparent, he had seen the unexpected forms of creatures of various shapes and sizes of the genus *Medusa*, which, when taken from their native element, resemble a soft mass of crystal, and, when restored to it again, seem to mingle themselves with its waters, and, by similarity of transparency and colour, to disappear entirely from view. He therefore drew the conclusion that, since living diaphanous substances inhabited the water, there was every reason to suppose that others of a similar nature dwelt in the atmosphere. Birds are not the real inhabitants of the air: they belong alike to earth and sky. Gilliatt did not believe that the air was uninhabited. He reasoned, if the sea is filled with its own creatures, why should the atmosphere be empty? May there not be living things in it, without colour, which disappear in the light, and so elude our vision? Who has proved to us that they do not exist? If we reason by analogy, we arrive at the conclusion that the air should have its fish as well as the sea.

The fish of the air would be transparent, by the far-seeing dispensation of the creative power, for their sakes as well as for ours, letting the light pass through their bodies, and casting no shadows, and without any defined outline; they remain unknown to us, and we can learn nothing regarding them.

Gilliatt had a strange idea that, if you could divest the earth of its atmosphere, and drag it, as you would a piece of water, that numbers of strange and unknown creatures would reward Asherman's efforts; and, as these thoughts flowed through his brain, he wondered if it were possible, and, if so, what strange revelations would be made!

Reverie, which is thought in its nebulous condition, borders on the realms of slumber, from which it is divided by an imperceptible barrier. The atmosphere, filled by these living transparencies, would be the entrance to the unknown; but beyond that opens the wider fields of possible conjecture. Then we should often find beings with other modes of life. Nothing supernatural, but the mysterious continuation of the infinity of nature.

Gilliatt, in his toilsome idleness, was a strange and yet an acute

observer of all things; he now pushed his researches into the kingdom of sleep.

Sleep is a contact with the Possible, which we also term the Unlikely. The world of night is a world of its own. Night, looked upon as night only, is a universe of itself. The material organisation of humanity, which is subjected to a pressure of an atmospheric column of fifteen leagues in height, becomes wearied towards nightfall, and longs for repose. It lies down; it rests; the eyes of the flesh close, and there, in that drowsy head, less helpless and inert than may be supposed, other ages open. Then the Unknown comes forward; the darker side of human life is more fully revealed, whether it is that there is a veritable communication, or that the visionary has the power given to him to pierce those dark abysses which before were hidden in gloom. It seems as though the shadowy denizens of space come to look upon us and gaze curiously upon the inhabitants of the terrestrial sphere.

A creation of spectres rises and sinks around us, and elbows us in the land of shadows before our spiritual vision; another life than ours, composed of ourselves and something else, keeps on going and coming, and the sleeper, not seeing perfectly clearly, and yet not entirely unconscious, gazes on those strange phantasms of animal and vegetable creation, those terrible yet smiling masses of pallor, the spectres, the masks, the faces, the dragons, and all those confused visions, the moonlight, with no visible moon; vague fragments, without form or name—all these, floating about in the troubled atmosphere of the night, are but the mystery we term a dream, and are nothing but the approach of an invisible reality. The dream is but the aquarium of the night. This is what Gilliatt thought.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SEAT OF GILD-HOLME-'UR.

In the present day it would be vain to seek, in the Bay of Houmet, for Gilliatt's house, his garden, or the little harbour in which he anchored his craft. The small peninsula upon which his cottage stood has fallen beneath the pickaxe of the men who have demolished rock and cliff, and has been loaded and carted away by the stone and granite merchants. It may now

be sought for in the churches, palaces, and quays which form a portion of the great capital. The whole of that reef of rock has long since been taken to London. The long lines of rocks, with their broken crests and deep crevices, which stretch far out to sea, form miniature chains of mountains, and, whilst gazing upon them, the same impression is conveyed as would impress a giant whilst looking upon the Cordilleras. In the local idiom of the country they are termed "*Banques*." These banques are of various shapes and forms: some resemble the dorsal bone, of which each rock is a vertebra; others are like the bone of a fish, whilst another looks like a crocodile drinking.

At the end of the banque of the Bû de la Rue was a high rock, which the fishermen of Houmet called the "Horn of the Beast." This rock, of a pyramidal shape, resembled somewhat the "Pinnacle" of Jersey, although its height was not so great. At high tide the sea flowed between it and the land, and the Horn became an island, but at low tide you could easily cross the rocks, and so gain it. The most curious feature in this rock was that, on the side next to the sea, there was a natural seat, hollowed out by the waves and polished by the rain; the seat, however, was perfidious. You would be insensibly attracted by the beauty of the view, and would stop there, "for love of the prospect," as they say in Guernsey. Something, you knew not what, detained you there, for there is a great charm in an extensive view of the ocean. The seat seemed to offer itself as a most convenient resting place; it formed a species of niche in the rugged face of the rock. It was very easy of access; for the sea, whilst hollowing it out, had, at the same time, formed a kind of natural staircase to it. The abyss is full of these traps. Do not be taken in by its civilities. The seat tempts you: you ascend, and, sitting down, find yourself entirely at your ease; for a seat, there is the well-worn granite, rounded by the waves of centuries; for elbow rests, there are two fragments of rock, which seemed to have been placed there for the purpose; whilst, as a rest for the back, you have the whole vertical height of the rock itself, which you gaze on with admiration, thinking how impossible it would be to ascend to its summit. There is nothing easier than to sink into forgetfulness whilst in this comfortable seat. The ocean lies stretched out before you: in the far distance are the ships passing backwards and forwards. It is possible to follow a vessel with the eye, until it sinks below the horizon behind the Caskets. You are delighted, and filled with admiration; you feast your eyes upon the glory of the scene, and revel

in the soft caresses of wind and wave. In Cayenne exists the fatal Vampire Bat, which lulls you to sleep in the shade, with the measured movements of its shadow-like wings. The sea breeze resembles this invisible bat; for, when it is not bent upon the work of destruction, it acts as a gentle inciter to repose. You gaze on the sea, you listen to the soft sighing of the breeze, a feeling of delicious languor steals over you. When the eyes are satiated by an access of light and beauty, how pleasant it is to close them! All of a sudden you wake up with a start; it is too late, the sea has risen silently and rapidly, and all escape is cut off.

You are lost.

What more terrible blockade can there be than that formed by the rising tide?

The water creeps up inch by inch; then, all of a sudden, it lashes itself into fury and breaks in foam just below you.

The stoutest swimmer could not hope to make his way through those breakers, and many a man has lost his life at the Horn of the Beast.

In certain places and at certain times it is dangerous to gaze upon the sea; sometimes the ocean is as fatal as the glance of a woman. The old inhabitants of Guernsey formally termed this niche, chiselled out of the rock by the ocean, "the Seat of Gild-Holm-'Ur," or *Idormur*, a Celtish word, which those who understand the Celt language do not comprehend, whilst those who speak French understand it at once.

*Qui dort meurt*\* is the peasants' translation of the word.

You are free to chose between *qui dort meurt*, and the translation given in the *Armorican* in 1819, I think, by Mons. Athenas. According to this authority upon the Celtic language, Gild-Holm-'Ur means "*the resting place of the birds*."

From the sea at high tide, the seat of Gild-Holm-'Ur is no longer visible: the water has covered it completely.

The seat of Gild-Holm-'Ur was well known to Gilliatt, and he often sat in it. Did he come there to think? No, for, as we said, he did not think, he dreamed. At anyrate, he had never let himself be surprised by the sea there.

\* He who sleeps, dies.



## BOOK II.

*MESS. LETHIERRY.*

## CHAPTER I.

## TROUBLED LIFE AND PEACEFUL CONSCIENCE.

Mess. Lethierry, a well-known character in Saint Sampson, was a thorough sailor: he had been afloat a great deal. He had been cabin-boy, able seaman, topman, pilot, second mate, mate, and skipper. He was now a shipowner. There was not another man with so much knowledge of the sea. He was great at saving lives. In heavy weather he would patrol the shore, fixing a searching eye on the horizon. What is that there—some boat in distress? A fishing-smack from Weymouth, a cutter from Aurigny, a schooner from Courseulle, a nobleman's yacht; it is an Englishman, a Frenchman, a rich man's pleasure boat or a poor man's craft, it did not signify one pin. He would jump into a boat, call on three or four stout fellows, or, for the matter of that, start by himself: up with the anchor, seize the oars, and make for the open sea; rise on the waves, then descend, then up again, brave storm and tempest, incur every risk. Far away in the squall, he might be seen standing up in his boat, dripping with rain, like a lion with a mane of foam, whilst the lightning played around him. Sometimes he would pass all his day in danger, exposed to waves, rain, and hail, saving men and cargoes, speaking to ships in distress, and disputing their prey with the elements. In the evening he would return home and sit down to knit stockings.

For nearly fifty years he spent his life in this manner—from ten years of age until sixty, so youthful did he still feel. At sixty he perceived that he could no longer lift, with one hand, the anvil which stood in the forge at Varelin, and which weighed three hundred pounds, and just at that time rheumatism made him a captive, and he had to give up the sea. Then he passed from the heroic to the patriarchal age, and became only a highly-respected neighbour. Rheumatism and independence had come upon him at the same moment. These two results of

toil often keep company. With riches, how frequently comes paralysis, the melancholy finale of a life of toil!

People say, "Let us enjoy ourselves now!"

The population of Guernsey is composed of men who have spent their lives either in their fields or in sailing about the world. There are two sorts of workers—workers on the land, and workers on the sea. Mess. Lethierry belonged to the latter class; but, for all that, he knew dry land well enough. He had worked hard in his time, and was well acquainted with the continent, for he had been a ship's carpenter at Rochefort and at Cette. We were speaking of sailing round the world: he had been round France, serving his time as a carpenter's apprentice, and had been employed at the draining of the salt marshes at Franche Comté. An upright man, he had led the life of an adventurer. In France he had learned to read, to think, and to will. He had had his fingers in many businesses, but had always maintained a reputation for honesty. From the bottom of his heart he was a sailor. Water was his element. "I am at home with the fish," he was in the habit of saying. With the exception of two or three years, all his life had been devoted to the sea. "I was flung into the water," said he. He had sailed both in the Atlantic and the Pacific, but, from choice, he preferred the Channel. He would cry out with delight, "Give me a rough sea!" He was born a sailor, and desired to end his days as one. After having been round the world twice, knowing very well what he was about, he came home to Guernsey, and had settled down there. His sea-voyages were now bounded by Granville and Saint Malo.

Mess. Lethierry was a Guernsleyman—that is a Norman, that is an Englishman, that is a Frenchman. These four lands, united in him, were ruled and dominated by his native country, the Ocean; but wherever he went he had always preserved the simple habits of a Norman fisherman. This, however, in no way prevented him from taking up some old book, in finding pleasure in literature, or in knowing the names of philosophers and poets, and having a smattering of many tongues.

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## CHAPTER II.

## A MATTER OF TASTE.

GILLIATT was one kind of savage, Mess. Lethierry another; but the latter had a certain amount of taste. He had his own opinions regarding a woman's hands. In his youth, when he was in the chrysalis stage, between cabin-boy and sailor, he had heard Admiral Suffren say, "There's goes a pretty girl, but what deuced big red hands she has!" An admiral's word is law. The admiral's remarks had made Lethierry most fastidious and exacting regarding white hands. His own hand was a great big fist of the colour of mahogany; it was a hammer for quickness, and like a vice for a friendly grasp, and when clenched could break a paving-stone. He had never been married; either he had not wished it, or else he had never found his ideal. Perhaps it was because this rough sea-dog wanted a girl with the hands of a duchess.

You do not meet with hands of this description amongst the fisher-girls of Portbail. There was a report, however, that at Rochefort, in Charente, he had met a *grisette*, whose hands came up to his standard. She was a pretty girl, with pretty hands, but she had a tongue of her own, and a nasty habit of scratching. It was not safe to quarrel with her. Though her nails were pink and rosy, and always kept in the most perfect order, yet, when occasion required, they could be turned into claws. Lethierry had first been delighted, and then a little alarmed with these beautiful nails, and, fearing one day he might not be the master of his mistress, he decided not to push the matter so far as marriage.

There was another girl from Aurigny who took his fancy, and whom he was really thinking of marrying, when a neighbour said to him, "I compliment you on your choice; she can prepare fuel against any girl in the place." This eulogium required an explanation. There is a certain custom prevalent at Aurigny. They take fresh cow-dung and fling it against the wall in a peculiar manner. When it gets dry it falls off, and they light their fires with it. A girl from Aurigny is not likely to get a husband unless she is good at making this kind of fuel. This accomplishment, however, dissipated Lethierry's matrimonial ideas.

Besides, in all his love affairs, he possessed a strong element of provincial philosophy, mingled with the cunning of the old

sailor—always falling in love, but never completely captured, and he boasted that in his youth he had always been easily conquered by a petticoat, or, as he termed it, a *cotillon*. What we nowadays call a *crinoline* was then spoken of as a *cotillon*, and more or less signifies a woman.

These rough sailors of the Norman Archipelago possess plenty of shrewdness. Nearly all know how to read and write. On Sundays you see cabin-boys of eight or nine years of age, seated up on coils of rope, with their books in their hands. From time-immemorial Norman sailors have been famed for satire, and have had a talent for repartee. The remark that the stout pilot, Queripel, made to Montgomery, when he sought refuge in Jersey, after his disastrous lance thrust, which resulted in the death of Henry II., was "*Tête folle a cassé tête vide.*" Then there was Touzeau, the master mariner of Saint Brelade, who made the joke erroneously attributed to Bishop Camus: "*Après la mort, les papes deviennent papillons, et les sires deviennent cirons.*"

## CHAPTER III.

### A CREVICE IN THE ARMOUR.

MESS. LETHIERRY carried his heart in his hand—a noble heart and an open hand. His great weakness was an excusable one: he put too much faith in his fellow-men. He had only one method of entering into any engagement, and that was to say solemnly, "I give my word of honour, before God." That once said he would carry out the business to the end. He believed in a merciful God, and in nothing else. He did not frequent churches much, and when he went there did so out of politeness. When at sea he was full of superstition. Nevertheless, no storm that ever blew could frighten him. This was for the reason that he had a will of his own. He would no more submit to the violence of the sea than he would to that of man. He expected to be obeyed, and all the worse for the sea if it opposed him; it might do its worst, but Mess. Lethierry would not yield an inch. A wave that thundered against him had no more effect than the abuse of an angry neighbour. When he said a thing he meant it, and what he ordered had to be carried out. He yielded no more before opposition than he did before a hurricane. There was not for him such a word as "No," either in the

mouth of a man or in the howling of the storm. He would take no refusal on any point. Hence his obstinacy throughout life, and his courage at sea. He knew exactly the right quantities of pepper, salt, and herbs to put into his simple dish of fish soup, and was as pleased with his mode of cooking as with his dinner. To complete Lethierry's portrait the reader must imagine a man who would have been utterly spoiled if dressed as a landsman, and who, with his hair streaming in the wind, looked like some old portrait of Jean Bart, but who, in a tall hat, would have resembled an imbecile. Ill at ease in towns, but at home on the decks. Shoulders broad enough for a porter; seldom uttering an oath, and hardly ever giving way to passion; a gentle voice, which swelled to tones of thunder through a speaking-trumpet. A peasant who had read the *Encyclopædia*; a Guernseyman who had witnessed the Revolution; an ignorant man, with a good deal of learning, and without any religious prejudice, but filled with dreams and ideas; having more faith in the White Lady than in the Holy Virgin; possessing the strength of Polyphemus and the logical powers of a weather-cock; the persevering energy of a Columbus, and a mixture of the bull and the child in his nature. To these qualities may be joined a rather flat nose, ruddy cheeks, a mouth without a missing tooth, and a deeply wrinkled face, upon which the storms and tempests that he had gone through were legibly written—a man who resembles a rock in the open sea. Add to all these a frank and open smile, and you have an exact portrait of Mess. Lethierry. Mess. Lethierry had two loves, Durande and Déruchette.

## BOOK III.

*DURANDE AND DERUCHETTE.*

## CHAPTER I.

## GOSSIP AND VAPOUR.

THE human body is but an envelope which conceals our reality ; it either throws a shadow over our light or else intensifies our darkness. The soul is our reality. Plainly speaking, our features are but a mask. The true man lies deep below the surface of the visible man. If we could study the inner man that lies hidden and shrouded behind that illusion which we term the flesh, what mysteries would not be revealed ! The most common error is to confound the outer shell with the spirit that dwells within it. Look at that young girl, for instance : if we could see her as she really is, might she not seem like a bird ?

A bird in the shape of a maiden—what could be more beautiful ? Imagine that you have such a being in your own home, and you can realise *Déruchette*. Equisite being ! When you see her you feel tempted to cry out : “ Good morning, *Mademoiselle Linnet* ! ” You cannot see her wings, but you can hear her musical notes. At times she sings. In the lisping accents of childhood she is, perhaps, an inferior creature, but in her song she soars far above common humanity. This sweet song contains a mystery ; the virgin soul shrouds in its inmost recesses an angel. When womanhood begins to appear the angel takes to flight, but later on it returns, and brings back a tender blossom of love to the mother. But, for a long while, the future mother remains a child ; the child becomes a maiden, fresh and gay as a linnet. As you look at her you wonder at her kindness in not taking wing and flying away. The sweet being to whom you have grown accustomed flits from branch to branch, or rather from room to room ; enters, goes out, nears you, flies from you, plumes her feathers, or rather combs her hair, and utters all those gentle, cooing sounds which are so sweet—we know not why—so sweet to the listening ear.

She asks a question and is replied to ; in her turn she is

interrogated, and for an answer bursts into a flood of song. How sweet it is, when wearied of more serious conversation, to sit and talk with her! There is a gleam of heaven about her. She casts a radiance upon your most gloomy thoughts. Seeing how airy and impalpable she is, you cannot but feel grateful at her not rendering herself invisible; for in this life the beautiful becomes a necessity. In the world there is no duty more important than that of being charming. Without the jewelled presence of the humming-bird, how gloomy would be the recesses of the forest! Is it not one of the most delightful duties of life to shed joy around you; to scatter happiness with your every word and movement; to cast a light into the darker corners of our life; to be the gilded cord that leads our destiny; and to be the true spirit of beauty and harmony?

The beautiful deserves all our gratitude, simply because it is the beautiful. How often do we meet someone who, herself all unconscious of it, has the magic power of casting a spell upon those around her? Her presence lights up everything; her coming sheds a delicious warmth; she passes by, you feel happy; she stops, and your pleasure is at its height. To gaze upon her is like taking a fresh draught of life. She is the sunrise in human form. All that you desire is her presence. She converts your home into a Paradise. And to do all this—to shed around her this perfume of joy and happiness—all she has to do is to live and breathe the same air with yourself. A smile from her lessens the weight of the heavy chain of life, which we poor mortals painfully drag after us. What more can I say? It was heaven itself. Déruchette possessed that smile. May not I go further, and say that that smile was Déruchette?

The inhabitants of Jersey and Guernsey are of a very attractive type. The women—more especially the young girls—have a peculiar beauty of their own, in which is combined the fairness of the Saxon and the fresh colour of the Norman race. They have delicately pink complexions and blue eyes, but these latter want fire. English education deadens them. Those limpid eyes would be irresistible were they but lighted up with the arch expression to be found in the glance of a French woman. Unfortunately, English girls have not yet arrived at this pitch of perfection. Déruchette was not a Parisian, but, then, she was not entirely a Guernsey girl. She was born at Saint Pierre Port, but Mess. Lethierry had brought her up, and had taught her to be neat and pretty, and she was so. There was an air of languor about Déruchette, sometimes mingled with an arch

expression of mischief, which she appeared entirely unconscious of possessing. Very likely she was ignorant of the meaning of love, and yet she inspired all those about her with the tender passion. But this was done in perfect innocence, without a thought of marriage. An old French gentleman, who had taken refuge in Guernsey, used to say, "The child carries on her flirtations with blank-cartridge."

Déruchette's hands were the prettiest in the world and her feet matched them. "Fairy-like feet," as Mess. Lethierry called them. She was kindness and purity personified. Her uncle Lethierry was all that she had to depend on in this world; her sole occupation was to exist; her only accomplishments a few simple songs; instead of knowledge she possessed beauty; in place of intellect, innocence; whilst simplicity served her instead of knowledge of the world. She had all the soft indolence of the Creole race, mingled with a sparkle of vivacity and the innocent provocations of a spoiled child; whilst through all ran an occasional vein of sadness. Her dress was rather countrified, but became her well, though she paid but little attention to the fashions, for she wore flowers in her bonnet all the year round. She had a frank and open brow; her neck was slender and beautifully moulded; her magnificent wealth of hair was of a light-brown hue; her skin was a pure white, slightly bronzed by the summer sun; the mouth was rather large, but exquisitely shaped, and on her lips lurked a smile that it was perilous to gaze upon.

Such was Déruchette's portrait.

Sometimes, as evening came on, after the sun had sought his couch, and the dark night fell upon the darker sea, when twilight invests every object with a terror not its own, a huge, distorted mass, which seemed to have risen from the depths of the ocean, could be perceived entering the inlet of Saint Sampson—a something that shrieked and spat out sparks, a terrible thing that roared like a wild beast, and sent forth volumes of smoke, like a volcano—a species of dragon, slaving out foam, and leaving behind it a long line of foggy smoke, rushing onwards towards the town, beating the water with its fin-like paddles, and opening a mouth which belched forth flames of fire. This was Durande.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE OLD HISTORY OF UTOTIA.

IN 182... a steamboat was a perfect novelty in the Channel waters, and excited the greatest astonishment the whole length of the coast of Normandy. In the present day no one thinks of looking at the ten or a dozen steamers which cross and recross these seas. At the very most, some one may affect to judge, from the colour of the smoke that issues from their funnels, whether the coals they burn have been procured from Wales or from Newcastle. No further attention is paid them than to give them a welcome on arrival, or to wish them a prosperous voyage when they steam out of port. In the first quarter of the present century the people did not take matters so calmly, and these machines, with their long cloud of smoke trailing behind them, were looked upon with much disfavour by the Channel Islanders. In this methodical archipelago, in which the Queen of England has been censured for disobeying the Scriptures\* by using anaesthetics during her confinement. The first steamer that appeared in these waters was unanimously christened the *Devil Boat*. In the eyes of these simple fishermen, who had relinquished Catholicism for Calvinism, but who still remained bigots, the steamer seemed like a fragment of hell floating on the surface of the waves. One of the local preachers selected for his text the first chapter of the Book of Genesis and the fourth verse, and boldly asked this question: "*Have we a right to make fire and water unite together, when God has separated these two elements?*"

Does not this monster, composed of fire and iron, resemble the Leviathan? Was not the making use of it to reduce the earth once more to chaos? This is not the only time that the progress of science has been scoffed at as a return to chaos.

*An insane idea, a gross blunder, an absurdity*;—such was the verdict given by the Academy of Science at the commencement of the present century, when consulted as to the practicability of the steamboat by Napoleon. The fishermen of Saint Sampson may be forgiven for not having attained a higher pinnacle of intellect than the scientists of Paris; and when a religious point is in question a little island like Guernsey may be pardoned

\* Gen. iii. 16. (In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.)

for not being more enlightened than a great continent like the United States. In 1807, when Fulton's steamship, commanded by Livingstone, and furnished with Watts' engines, was sent from England, with two Frenchmen acting as engineers, Auché Michaux, and another man, it chanced that its first trip was commenced on the 17th of August. The Dissenting community seized upon this, and in all their chapels the preacher solemnly cursed the vessel, asserting that number 17 formed the total of the ten horns and seven heads of the Beast of the Revelations. In America they compared the steamboat to the Beast of the Apocalypse, and in Europe to the Serpent of Genesis, and that was all the difference.

Scientific men had declared the steamboat to be practically an impossibility. The clergy had denounced it as impious. Science had set its face against it, and religion dismissed it to the lower regions. Fulton was a species of Lucifer. The primitive inhabitants of the coast and in the interior, adhered to their first prejudices from the discomfort that they felt in gazing on this novelty. Religious persons promulgated the following opinion on steamboats:—"In the beginning, fire and water were separated by especial ordinance of the Creator, and man has no right to join together what He had put asunder." The peasants' argument was much simpler—"It frightened me!"

At this period, to venture to run a steamer from Guernsey to Saint Malo, required the courage of a Mess. Lothierry. As a Freethinker, he alone dared to conceive the idea, and, as a bold seaman, to carry it out. The French side of his character conceived it, and the English side executed it.

We will now tell how it all came about.

### CHAPTER III.

#### RANTAINÉ.

Forty years before the events that we are relating occurred, there stood, in the suburbs of Paris, hard by the fortifications, between the Fosse-aux-Lions and the Tombe Issoire, a house of ill-repute. It was a lonely dwelling, with a regular cut-throat appearance. In this retreat dwelt a man, with his wife and child, who lived by all kinds of nefarious practices. He had

formerly been clerk to an attorney; from thence the transition to the profession of robber was simple enough. He had more than once been tried at the assizes, and his name was Rantaine. In his house, on a mahogany chest of drawers, were two china cups, with gilt lettering upon them. On one was written "*A Souvenir of Friendship*;" upon the other, "*A Token of Esteem*." The child, from his earliest years, lived face to face with crime. As the father and mother belonged to the lower class of citizens they taught the boy to read and write. The mother, clothed in sordid rags, taught him his lessons mechanically, and heard him spell, interrupting his studies every now and then to assist her husband in some of his criminal enterprises, or to earn the wages of vice amongst the sad Sisterhood. During their absence the book remained opened on the table, and the child sat still, looking upon it with a dreamy air. One day the law laid its hands upon the father and the mother, detected in some flagrant act of criminality, and they disappeared into that gloomy region of which the Court of Assizes is the gate.

Then the child, in his turn, disappeared.

Lethierry, in the course of his wanderings, came across an adventurer like himself; saved him from an awkward predicament in which he was placed, and, taking a fancy to him, brought him to Guernsey, the stranger all the time being loud in his professions of gratitude. Mess. Lethierry, who found that he was skilled in the coasting trade, took him as a partner. This was how Rantaine became a man.

Rantaine, like Lethierry, had a short, thick neck, powerful shoulders for bearing weights, and loins like those of the Farnese Hercules. Lethierry and Rantaine had the same appearance and breadth of chest, but the latter was the taller. Those who saw their backs as they walked together exclaimed, "There go two brothers." But when they looked in their faces they at once saw the difference. In Lethierry all was frank and open, whilst Rantaine had a cautious and cunning expression. Rantaine was a practised swordsman; he could play on the harmonium, and snuff a candle with a pistol bullet at twenty paces, whilst the blow that he could give with his fist had earned him a certain reputation. He could repeat verses from the *Henriade*, and knew by heart the *Tombs of Saint Denis*, by Treneuil. He asserted that he had been acquainted with the Sultan of Calicut, whom the Portuguese call "*Zamorin*." If you could have glanced into the little note-book which he always carried about with him you would have found entries of this description: "At Lyons, in a

crack in the walls of one of the cells in the prison of Saint Joseph, you will find a file hidden away." He spoke slowly and with deliberation. He declared that he was a son of a chevalier of Saint Louis. His linen did not match, and was marked with many initials. He was very tetchy regarding his honour, and had killed a man in a duel. His eyes were as sharp as those of an actress's mother. Rantaine was an emblem of cunning, concealed by strength. Lethierry had been first impressed in his favour by seeing him use his fists at a fair. His former life was a sealed book to the inhabitants of Guernsey. It had been strange and varied. If the theatre of life possessed dresses for its actors, that of a harlequin would have suited Rantaine the best. He knew well the world he lived in. He had been all round it, and had essayed many professions. He had been a cook in Madagascar, a bird-fancier in Sumatra, a general in Honolulu, the editor of a religious paper in the Gallapagos Islands, a poet at Oomrawuttee, and a Freemason in Haiti. In this last position he had delivered a funeral oration at Grand Goâve, of which the local journals have preserved a portion. "Farewell, then, mighty spirit, in heaven's azure vaults, to which thou art now winging thy way, thou wilt doubtless meet the good priest Leandre Crameau, of Petit Goâve! Tell him that, after ten years of sublime work, thou hast at last completed the church of Anse-à-Veau. Farewell, transcendant genius and model Mason!" You will perceive that his Freemason's mask did not prevent him from occasionally putting on the disguise of a Roman Catholic. The former conciliated the men of progress, the latter the men of order. He declared himself a white man of the purest type, and hated the negroes; but he would certainly have been an admirer of the Emperor Soulouque. At Bordeaux, in 1815, his enthusiastic loyalty came to the front in the shape of a huge white plume worn in his hat. His life had been a series of eclipses—vanishing, re-appearing, and then vanishing again. He was a scoundrel of the shooting-star class. He understood a little Turkish, and, instead of *guillotined*, used to say *néboissé*. He had been the slave of a Thabeb in Tripoli, and had been taught Turkish by the aid of the stick! His duty had been to go to the doors of the mosque and to read aloud to the faithful texts from the Koran, written on slips of wood or on camel-leather.

Doubtless he was a renegade.

He was capable of that and many worse things. He could laugh and scowl at the same time. Some of his favourite sayings

were : " In politics I only admire those men who are beyond all influences ; " or else, " I am entirely in favour of moral rectitude." He was easy and cordial in his manner. The expression of his mouth, however, gave the lie to his speech ; his nostrils were rather wide ; the corners of his eyes were deeply wrinkled, and seemed like a place of meeting for all kinds of dark thoughts, and these were the only features in which you could read his character. His foot was like the claw of a bird of prey. His forehead was low, but prominent at the temples. His ears, huge, and covered with hair, seemed to say, in a warning voice, " Do not speak to the animal in this cave."

One fine day Guernsey suddenly missed Rantaine.

Lethierry's partner had decamped, leaving the safe empty.

There was certainly some of Rantaine's money in this safe, but there was also fifty thousand francs belonging to Lethierry.

Lethierry, in the course of forty years' hard work as ships' carpenter and coasting trader, had amassed, by his honest industry, a hundred thousand francs, and Rantaine had carried off half. Although half ruined, Lethierry did not lose courage, and immediately looked about for a chance of recovering himself. People were just then beginning to talk about steamboats. The idea entered Lethierry's head to try Fulton's much-disputed invention, and, by a fire-boat, to connect the coast of France and the Norman Archipelago. He staked his all on the chance. He gave up everything to it, and six months afterwards the astonished beholders saw leaving the port of Saint Sampson a vessel discharging huge volumes of smoke, resembling a conflagration on the waters. This was the first steamer that ploughed the waves of the Channel. To this vessel people, who detested any novelty, at once gave the nickname of " Lethierry's Galley," and it was advertised to run between Guernsey and Saint Malo.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF UTOPIA.

At first Lethierry's new venture was not an entire success. The owner of the cutters trading between France and Guernsey were loud in their complaints ; they denounced this attack upon Holy Writ and their monopoly. One reverend preacher, named Elihu, called the steamer " a Freethinking concern," and sailing

vessels only were declared orthodox. Everyone plainly saw the horns of Satan on the heads of the cattle that were embarked, and disembarked by the fire-ship. This prejudice lasted a certain time; then, little by little, people began to perceive that the cattle were much less fatigued on their arrival, and consequently sold better; that there was less damage to human life, that the passage-money was lower, the time consumed shorter, and the hours of arrival and departure more regular. That the fish, being delivered at fixed time, were perfectly fresh, and that therefore a market would be found in France for the surplus of the large takes so common in Guernsey. Then the butter, the produce of the excellent breed of cows, made a more rapid passage in the Devil Boat than in the ordinary sailing sloop, and lost none of its excellent qualities, so that it was in great demand at Dinan, at Saint Brieuc, and at Rennes; so that at last, thanks to *Lethierry's galley*, there was safe and prompt communication with the opposite coast, easy transport, an increase of civilisation, a better market, and general extension of commerce, and that, in fine, it had to be allowed that the Devil Boat, if it went against the Bible, was certainly bringing a good deal of money into the island.

Some advanced minds even ventured to approve of it openly. Lieutenant Landoys, the clerk, gave the vessel his cordial approval, which was an act of great impartiality on his part; for he did not care for Lethierry, because Lethierry was called *Mess.*, and Landoys simply *Sieur*. Besides, although Registrar of Saint Pierre Port, Landoys was a parishioner of Saint Sampson, and there were only two big men in the parish, Lethierry and himself; therefore there was every reason for their disbelieving each other. "The longer you live the less you are acquainted," says the proverb.

However, *Sieur Landoys* had the fairness to approve of the steamboat, and others followed in his wake. Little by little this following increased. Opinions swell like the tide, and, seeing the continued success and the evident progress of the undertaking, people began in time to change their opinions, and, with the exception of a few of the old school, who maintained their original prejudiced views, all began to admire and speak well of *Lethierry's galley*.

At the present day his vessel would not have been much admired. Our modern builders would laugh at such a craft, for this wonder was very clumsy; their prodigy had many faults. The difference between our ocean-liners of the present

day and the boats with steam-paddles, which Denis Papin placed afloat on the Fulda in 1707, is not greater than between the *Montebello* and a three-decker, two hundred feet in length, and fifty in breadth, having a mainyard a hundred and fifteen feet long, with a displacement of three thousand tons, carrying eleven hundred men and one hundred and twenty guns, discharging at each broadside three thousand three hundred pounds of iron, and, when she sails, spreading to the wind five thousand six hundred square yards of canvas, and the old Danish canoe of the second century, which was discovered in the mud salt-marshes of Wester Satrup, half filled with stone, axes, bows, and clubs, and placed in the Hotel de Ville at Flensbourg.

Exactly one hundred years interval—1707 to 1897—separates Papin's first attempt from Fulton's invention. Certainly, *Lethierry's galley* was a decided step in advance of both of these; but, after all, it was susceptible of great improvements; yet, in its way, it was a great success. Every scientific discovery has a double aspect—a monster in its inception, a wonder in its germ.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE DEVIL'S BOAT.

LETHIERRY's galley was not masted with a view to sailing rapidly. This, however, was no defect, but a strict following of the rules of naval architecture. As steam was used as a means of propulsion, canvas was merely intended as an auxiliary. A paddle-wheel steamer, besides, hardly feels the power of sails. The steamer was too bluff and too short for a good sailing vessel; she had too much beam and too great a breadth of quarter, for builders had not yet ventured to construct their vessels light. The galley had some of the bad qualities of Gilliat's boat; she did not pitch much, but she rolled terribly. Her paddle-boxes were too high, and her beam was in disproportion to her length. Her heavy engines encumbered her a good deal, and, to render her capable of carrying a large freight, her builders had raised the bulwarks to an inordinate height, giving all the faults of those old seventy-fours, which ought to be cut down to make them seaworthy or fit for action. Being so short she ought to have been able to go about quickly, as the time employed in this manner depends on the length of

the vessel; but the weight amidships deprived her of the advantage that she should have derived from her shortness. Her beam was too broad, which greatly retarded her, as the resistance of the water is proportionate to what is below the water-line; her prow was vertical, as now built, but at that period it was the custom to give them a slope of forty-five degrees. The lines of her hull went well together. She was steered by the old-fashioned tiller, and not by a wheel. Two light ~~gins~~ were hung at the davits. She had four anchors—the sheet-anchor, a working anchor, and two bower anchors. These anchors, with their chain-cables, were worked by the main capstan at the poop, and the small capstan at the prow. At that time a small engine had not superseded the old capstan and its bars. Having only two bower anchors—one on the port, and one on the starboard side—she was not a handy ship in certain winds. In these she had to rely on her sheet-anchor. Her speed was about six knots an hour. On the whole, Lethierry's galley was a good-enough sea-boat, but there was a strong feeling that, when in danger from reefs or water-spouts, she would not be a manageable vessel. Unfortunately, from some defect in her build, when she rolled, she creaked like a new shoe. She was built entirely for a cargo boat—for commerce, and not for war, and everything had been sacrificed to stowage room. She had very little passenger accommodation. Cattle were then carried below, which made loading a complicated matter. Now they are stowed on deck. The paddle-boxes of the Devil's Boat were painted white, the hull, down to the water-line, red, and the rest of the vessel black, according to the ugly fashion of the day. Empty, she drew seven feet; laden, fourteen. The engine was a powerful one—one horse-power to every three tons of cargo.

The paddle-wheels were judiciously placed a little in advance of the centre of gravity. The highest pressure was equal to two atmospheres. It burnt a great deal of coal, though it was built on the expansion and condensation principle. Considering the period at which it was made, the engine was an excellent one. It had been manufactured in France, at the Foundry of Bercy. Mess. Lethierry had partially designed it, and the engineer, who had constructed it according to his plan, was dead, so that it was unique of its kind, and almost impossible to replace. The man who planned it lived, but the constructor had passed away. It had cost forty thousand francs. Lethierry had himself built the galley in the large covered yard by the



side of the first Martello Tower, between Saint Pierre Port and Saint Sampson. He had bought the wood at Brême, and had exerted in her construction all the knowledge that he had acquired during the years that he had worked as a ship-carpenter. You could see how thoroughly he understood his business by the manner in which the planking was laid down, the seams of which were caulked with saragowti—an Indian mastix, superior to pitch. The copper used for her sheathing had been well hammered out. On the day of the launch he exclaimed, in the fulness of his heart, "I am afloat at last!" The vessel proved a success, as we have already informed the reader. Either by chance or on purpose, she had been launched on the 14th of July. On that day Lethierry stood upon the paddle-box, and, looking fixedly upon the ocean, exclaimed, "It is your turn now. To-day the Parisians took the Bastille, and to-day we capture you." Once a week the steamer plied between Guernsey and Saint Malo. She left on Tuesday morning and returned on Friday night, in time for Saturday's market. She was a larger vessel than any of the coasting sloops, and, her power being on a par with her size, one trip brought in a profit equivalent to four of an ordinary boat. Hence, Lethierry's gains were considerable. The reputation of a vessel depends a good deal upon the way in which the cargo is stored away, and Lethierry was an accomplished stovedore. When he was past work he trained up a man to take his place. After two years the steamer brought in an annual revenue of seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling. The Guernsey pound is worth twenty-four francs, that of England twenty-five, and that of Jersey twenty-six: these differences are not so unimportant as they may seem—at anyrate, the banks make a profit out of them.

## CHAPTER VI.

### LETHIERRY'S TRIUMPH.

"THE GALLEY" did good business, and Mess. Lethierry began to calculate when the day would come for him to be termed Monsieur. In Guernsey it takes some time before you arrive at the dignity of "Monsieur." Between Mess. and Monsieur there are many steps of the social ladder to ascend. The first rung is the plain name, without any prefix—we will say Pierre; then

comes the second, Neighbour Pierre; then the third, Father Pierre; the fourth, *Sieur Pierre*; fifth, *Mess. Pierre*; then we reach the top, and can ascend no higher, *Monsieur Pierre*. This scale, springing from the earth, reaches to the highest aristocratic pinnacle. Here we give the various grades of social position. Above *Monsieur*, or gentleman, comes the esquire; next, the knight—a title held for life only; then comes the baronet, an hereditary title; then the lord, or *laird*, as it is called in Scotland; next, the baron, the viscount, the count (termed an *earl* in England, and *jarl* in Norway); then the marquis, then the duke, then the peer of England, then the prince of royal blood, and, lastly, the king. Thanks to the idea which he had conceived and carried out, thanks to steam, to his engine, and to the Devil's Boat, *Mess. Lethierry* had become a person of some importance. To enable him to build the "Galley," he had borrowed, and he owed money at Brême and Saint Malo; but each year he reduced the amount of his debt.

He had purchased, on credit, close to the entrance of the harbour of Saint Sampson, a pretty stone house, recently erected, with the sea in front and a garden behind. On one of the corners its name could be read—"Les Bravées." The front of the house, which was on a line with the harbour wall, had two rows of windows, the north side looking upon the flower-garden, and the south upon the sea; so that the house had two aspects—one on the storms of ocean, and the other upon nature, scented by roses.

Each inhabitant of the house, therefore, enjoyed a suitable view—the south for *Mess. Lethierry*, and the north for *Déruchette*.

Les Bravées had become quite a popular place of resort amongst the inhabitants of Saint Sampson, for *Lethierry* had risen rapidly in public consideration. This change in popular feeling was due to his intrepidity and devotion, to the number of lives that he had been instrumental in preserving, but chiefly to the successful termination of his enterprise, and to the fact that he had made Saint Sampson the point of arrival and departure of a steamboat. When the inhabitants of Saint Pierre saw what a success the Devil's Boat was achieving they were anxious to make their port its starting point; but *Mess. Lethierry* insisted that his native town, Saint Sampson, should still retain that privilege.

"It was here that I was first cast upon the sea," said he. And this speech obtained for him great local popularity. His

position as a landed proprietor and a ratepayer made him what is called, in Guernsey, a *habitant*, and he was elected to some parochial offices.

The old sailor had ascended six of the rungs of the ladder of Guernsey social precedence. He had already the title of *Mess.* and he was close on that of *Monsieur*. Who could venture to say that one day the proud title of *Lethierry, Esq.*, might not be found inscribed in the book containing the list of the nobility and gentry of the island of Guernsey?

But Mess. Lethierry despised such distinctions as foolish vanities. What he liked best was the useful; and to be necessary delighted him more than to be popular. He had, as we have said, but two weaknesses, and these were Durande and Déruchette.

He had taken a chance in the lottery of life, and this had drawn a prize, and this prize was the Durande cleaving the waters of the Channel.

## CHAPTER VII.

AFTER having created his steamship, Lethierry christened it, and called it Durande. The Durande, and we will for the future term her so, and will, in spite of typographical custom, refrain from printing her name in italics, in conformity with the opinion of Mess. Lethierry, in whose sight the Durande was almost a living creature.

Durande and Déruchette are the same; the latter is the diminutive, and is greatly used in the western parts of France.

In country places the saints are known by their diminutives as well as by their full names. When you hear them spoken of, you would think that there were several people instead of only one. The identity of patron saints is not a rare thing: Lise, Lisette, Lisa, Elisa, Isabelle, Lisbeth, Betsy, all claim Elizabeth as their Patron Saint. It is probable that Mahout, Maclou, Malo, and Magloire are the same saint; this, however, is a mere surmise.

Saint Durande is much respected in the Angoumois and La Charente. Is she a recognised saint? This is a matter that regards the framers of the calendar. Recognised or not, she has many chapels. Lethierry, when he was a young sailor at

Rochefort, had made this saint's acquaintance—most likely in the shape of some pretty girl of Charente; perhaps it might have been the grisette with the pink nails. At anyrate there was some pleasant memory connected with her, which induced him to give her name to the two things that he loved best in all the world, adapted to his daughter Déruchette, and Durande to his mind. He was the father of the one and the uncle of the other. Déruchette was the daughter of his brother; she was an orphan. He had adopted her and filled the place of her father and mother. Déruchette was not merely his niece, she was also his godchild. He it was who had held her in his arms at the baptismal font; he it was who had selected her patron saint, and had found for her the name of Déruchette. As we have before said, Déruchette was born at Saint Pierre, and her name was entered on the parish register. As long as the uncle and niece were in poor circumstances, no one cared what she was called; but when the little girl became a miss, and the sailor a gentleman, the name of Déruchette shocked them; all were astonished at it. They asked Mess. Lethierry, "Why do you call her Déruchette?" He replied, "It is as good as any other name." Several efforts were made to have her re-christened, but he would lend his aid to no such project. One day a fine lady, of high standing in Saint Sampson, the wife of a rich iron master who had retired from business, said to Mess. Lethierry, "From henceforth I shall call you niece Nancy."

"Why not Lous le Saulnier, if we are to call her after a city?" asked he. The lady did not, however, relinquish her design, and next day said to him, "We cannot really have Déruchette any more; I have found a charming name for your niece, *Marianne*." "Certainly a very pretty name," answered Mess. Lethierry, but composed of the abominable words, *husband* and *donkey*; \* and he resolutely adhered to Déruchette. It would be a mistake to suppose, from Lethierry's joke, that he did not desire to marry his niece. He did wish her to marry, but, then, he wanted to select her husband himself. He desired a man of his own stamp, a thorough hard worker, who would keep his wife like a lady. He liked a man's hands to show that he worked hard, as much as he appreciated soft white hands in a woman. To prevent Déruchette from spoiling her pretty fingers he had always brought her up as a lady. He had engaged a music-master for her, given her a piano, a small collection of books

\* A pun upon the French words, *mari* and *âne*.

and a work-basket duly stored with needles and thread. But she read more than she sewed, and played more than she read. This suited Mess. Lethierry. All that he wanted was that she should be pretty. He had brought her up more like a flower than a young girl. Anyone will understand this who has studied a sailor's character. Rough and uncultured as their nature may be, they love refinement in others. In order that the niece might become what the uncle desired it was necessary that she should be wealthy. His steamer was working for this result. La Durande's duty was to earn a dowry for Déruchette.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### "BONNIE DUNDEE."

DÉRUCHETTE'S room was the prettiest in the house, and was furnished with well-polished mahogany; the bed had green and white curtains. The two windows looked on to the garden and the high hill on which stands the Chateau de Valle. The *Bû de la Rue* is on the other side of the hill. Déruchette's piano stood in her room; she often played on it, singing the song she loved best—the melancholy Scotch melody of "Bonnie Dundee." The gloom of evening is in the air, but her voice recalled the freshness of sunrise, and made a pleasant contrast. Passeraby said, "Miss Déruchette is at her piano," and sometimes stopped at the garden wall to listen to so sweet a song with so melancholy an air.

Déruchette was the very life of the house, as she flitted to and fro. She was like eternal spring; she was beautiful, but more pretty than beautiful, and more graceful than pretty. To the old seafaring friends of Lethierry she was like the princess of the song so frequently sung by the camp and galley fires, who was so beautiful that

"Quelle passait pour telle dans le régiment."

Mess. Lethierry used to say, "She has hair as thick as a cable." As a child, she had been simply delicious; some people objected to her nose, but the child, evidently determined to be pretty, had grown up in such a manner, that even this feature satisfied all critics. Her beauty rather increased as she grew up; her nose was neither too long or too short, and she every day grew more charming.

She always called her uncle "Father."

Lethierry allowed her to do a little gardening, and a small proportion of household work. She watered with her own hands her flower-beds, filled with pink hollyhocks, purple fox-glove, perennial phlox, and scarlet burnets. She took every advantage that the Guernsey climate, which is so favourable to floriculture, afforded. Like other persons, her aloes were in the open, and she succeeded in the more difficult task of cultivating the Nepaulese cinque foil. Her little kitchen garden was well arranged; she had a crop of spinach after her radishes, and peas succeeded the spinach. She knew the right time to put in Dutch cauliflowers and Brussels Sprouts, which she transplanted in July; she had turnips in August, and curled endive in September, plenty of round parsnips for autumn, and campion for winter. Mess. Lethierry allowed her to do a certain amount of gardening, on condition that she did not use the rake and spade too much, or do any coarse work. She had two servants under her, Grace and Douce—two thoroughly Guernsey names, who did the hard work in house and garden, and had the right to have red hands.

Mess. Lethierry's room was a little cupboard, with a window looking on to the harbour, communicating with the hall on the ground floor, in which was the front door and the staircase. The furniture of his room consisted of his hammock, his chronometer, and his pipe. There was also a table and some chairs; the beams and the ceiling had been whitewashed, as were also the walls. On the right hand side of the door, was nailed a chart of the channel, bearing the name, "*W. Fudew, 5, Charing Cross, Geographer to His Majesty*"; and on the left, stretched against the wall, was one of those large cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, on which are portrayed the signal-code, having the flags of France, Russia, Spain, and the United States in the four corners, and the Union Jack in the centre.

Grace and Douce had certain good points about them. Douce was good-natured and Grace was good-looking. Douce was unmarried, and kept company with a young man. The girls had something of the Creole slowness in their method of doing their work. Grace, coquettish and pretty, was always looking out to sea, with a sort of cat-like anxiety. Report said that this arose from the fact, that not only had she, like Douce, a young man, but that she was married to a sailor, whose return she dreaded. But with this we have nothing to do. In a home conducted with his simplicity, Douce would have remained the

servant, and Grace become the confidential maid, but the possible talents of Grace were lost on an innocent mind like that of her young mistress. Both Grace and Douce's love affairs were kept carefully in the background. Mess. Lethierry had no suspicion of them, and Déruchette never thought of such things for a moment. The ground-floor room, which was a large one, with a deep fire-place, surrounded by benches, with a table in front of it, had been used as a meeting-house for French Protestant refugees. The only attempt at ornament on the bare wall was a parchment in a wooden frame, upon which were inscribed the good deeds of Benignus Bossuet, the Bishop of Meaux. Some poor inhabitants of the diocese of this redoubtable prelate, nicknamed the "Eagle," persecuted by him at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and compelled to seek safety in Guernsey, had hung up this parchment as a remembrance of him. In letters of faded ink could still be deciphered, though with difficulty, such facts as these—facts which are but little known:—"October the 29th, 1685, the Bishop of Meaux petitions the King for permission to raze to the ground the conventicles of Morcef and Nanteuil." "April the 2nd, 1686.—The Cochards, father and son, were wanted on account of heresy, at the request of the Bishop of Meaux." (Note.—The Cochards were released, having recanted.) "October the 28th, 1699.—The Bishop of Meaux sends a dispatch to Mons. de Pontchartrain, urging upon him the necessity of placing the young ladies of the families of Chalandes and Neuville, belonging to the reformed religion, in the convent of the New Catholics in Paris." "July the 7th, 1703.—The warrant issued by the King, ordering the imprisonment of Baudoin and his wife, of Fublaines, *as bad Catholics*, was executed by the Bishop of Meaux."

At the end of the room, near Lethierry's door, was a wooden erection, which had been the Huguenot pulpit, but which now, by some iron railings and a pigeon-hole, had become the steamboat office—that is, the office of the Durande, at which Mess. Lethierry personally presided. The Bible in the former oaken pulpit had been replaced by a large book, the pages of which were marked "Dr." and "Cr."

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## CHAPTER IX.

## SOMEONE WHO HAD FOUND OUT RANTAINÉ.

As long as his health would permit, Lethierry had commanded the *Durande*, and had employed no other captain or pilot; but the time had at last arrived when he was compelled to find a substitute. He had chosen for this post *Sieur Clubin*, of *Torteval*, a quiet, taciturn man, who was considered by all to possess a character of the strictest probity. He became Lethierry's other self.

*Sieur Clubin*, although he had something the appearance of a notary, was a bold and skilful seaman. He had all the knowledge necessary to encounter the dangers of his profession. He was a good stevedore, a skilful reefer, a steady and careful boatswain, a clever pilot, and an intrepid captain. He was prudent, yet he sometimes carried that virtue to the pitch of audacity, which is a good quality in a seaman. His natural fear of probable danger was toned down by his knowledge of what to do when such danger arose. He was one of those seamen who have no hesitation in facing danger up to a point in which they have experience, and generally manage to get out of the peril in some way or other. He possessed all the knowledge which a man can attain to who has to deal with so uncertain an element as the ocean. In addition, *Sieur Clubin* was a magnificent swimmer. He was of that race of men who have been broken in to make their way through the waves, and who can remain for any length of time in the water—who can enter the sea at *Havre des Pas* in *Jersey*, swim round the *Colettes*, pass the *Hermitage* and *Castle Elizabeth*, and return to his starting-point in two hours. He came from *Torteval*, and it was reported that he had swam across the dangerous passage between the *Honois* rocks and *Plainmont*. One thing about him which had inspired *Mess. Lethierry* with the greatest confidence was the fact that *Clubin* had estimated *Rantainé's* character correctly almost at a glance. "That man will rob you," said he. And the event verified the prophecy. More than once—certainly in trifling matters—Lethierry had put *Clubin's* honesty to the test, and he treated him on a perfectly confidential footing.

"A good conscience should be treated with every confidence," was one of *Mess. Lethierry's* sayings.



## CHAPTER X.

## A LONG YARN.

LETHERRY, for comfort's sake, always wore his sea-going clothes, and preferred his sailor's jersey to his pilot's jacket. This sometimes made Déruchette turn up her little nose. Nothing is prettier than to see a pretty girl pout. She would scold him, and, with an arch smile, would say, "How you smell of pitch and tar, my dear father!" and then she would give him a little tap on his broad shoulders.

The stout old sea-dog had many wonderful tales to tell of adventures that had befallen him in his voyages and travels. In Madagascar he had seen birds, three of the feathers of which were sufficient to roof a house. In India he had come across sorrel, the stalks of which were nine feet high. In New Holland he had seen flocks of geese and turkeys, led and guarded by a bird called the Agami, who acted in the same manner as a shepherd's dog. He had come across the gorilla—the terrible man-monkey of Africa—more than seven feet in height. He had visited the burial grounds of the elephant; he knew the habits of all the monkey tribe, from the one called the *macaco bravo* to the howling monkey known by the name of the *macaco barbado*. In Chili he had seen an ape endeavour to excite the pity of the hunters by exhibiting its little one. In California he had examined the hollow trunk of a tree which had fallen to the ground, and through which a man on horseback could ride a distance of one hundred and fifty paces. In Morocco he had witnessed a fight between the Mozabites and the Biskris, who were armed with *matraks* and bars of iron. The Biskris fought because they had been called "kelb," which means dog, and the Mozabites because they had been treated as *khamai*, which means men of the fifth caste. In China he had been a spectator of the execution of the pirate Chanh-thong-quan-larh-Quoi, who was cut into pieces for having murdered the head man of a village. At Thu-dan mot he was present when a lion carried off an old woman from the market-place. He had assisted at the arrival of the Great Serpent, brought from Canton to Saigon, to celebrate the festival of Quan-nam, the goddess of sailors in the Pagoda, of Cho-len. He had seen the mighty Quan-Sû among the Moi. In Brazil he had seen the ladies put little muslin caps in their hair, each containing a fire-fly, making a beautiful luminous headdress. In Uruguay he

had fought with ants, and in Paraguay with gigantic spiders, covered with down and as large as a child's head, with legs a foot long, who attack human beings by darting their bristles into them like arrows, raising painful blisters. On the banks of the river Arinos—a branch of the Tocantim—he had seen, in the primeval forests of the Diamantina, a terrible race of bat-shaped men, who are born with white hair and red eyes, and dwell in the deepest recesses of the wood, sleeping all day, but hunting and fishing by night, seeing the best when there is no moon. Once, near Beyrouth, a pluviometer was stolen from an expeditionary camp which he had joined. A sorcerer, wearing only two or three strips of leather, looking like a man with nothing on but his braces, who had been called, rang a bell so violently that at last a hyena ran up with the missing rain-gauge in his mouth.

The beast had been the thief.

These true stories, which had all the air of romance, were what he would amuse Déruchette with.

The figure-head of the *Durande*, which was the connecting link between the ship and his niece, was an object of great affection to Mess. Lethierry. He had ordered it to be made a likeness of Déruchette. It was very roughly executed, and resembled a lump of wood trying to look like a girl.

This shapeless block, however, had a great influence upon Mess. Lethierry. He had quite a superstitious feeling regarding it. He believed in it as a perfect portrait of Déruchette. Thus the article of faith resembles the truth, and the idol the deity.

Mess. Lethierry had two festivals a week—Tuesday and Friday. His first pleasure was to see the *Durande* leave the harbour; his next to watch her return. He would lean his elbows on the window-sill and gaze with admiration on his work, and was completely happy. It was something like the verse in Genesis, which says, "And He saw that it was good." On Friday the appearance of Mess. Lethierry at his window was as good as a signal. When the neighbours saw him light his pipe at the window of Les Bravées, they cried out "Ah! the steamer is in sight." In fact, one smoke announced the arrival of the other.

As soon as the *Durande* entered the harbour she was moored to a large iron ring fixed in the wall of the house under Lethierry's window. On these nights Lethierry slept peacefully in his hammock, feeling that both *Durande* and Déruchette were close at hand.

The moorings of the *Durande* were close to the harbour bell,

and there was between it and Les Bravées a narrow piece of pavement. The quay, the house, the garden, the lanes bordered with hedges, and the greater portion of the neighbouring houses have all passed away. The extensive demand for Guernsey stone has been the destruction of all of them. The whole space is now occupied by the yards of the workers in stone.

## CHAPTER XI.

### ON FUTURE HUSBANDS.

DERUCHETTE grew up, but she still remained single. Mess. Lethierry, by bringing up his daughter without permitting her to soil her hands, had rendered her rather fastidious. Lethierry also had his prejudices: he wanted to find in the same man a husband for Déruchette and a master for Durande. His desire was to provide for both his daughters at once; he wished to find a guide for the one and a pilot for the other.

What is a husband but the captain on the voyage of life? Why should his daughter and his ship not both have the same commander? Each household has its tides, which ebb and flow. He who understands how to pilot a barque can easily guide a woman, for both woman and ship are influenced by the moon and the wind. *Sieur Clubin* was only fifteen years younger than Lethierry, so that he could not expect him to retain his command for many years. A younger pilot must be sought for, a permanent commander, a definite successor to the builder, creator, and inventor. The permanent captain of the *Durande* would be half a son-in-law, in Lethierry's opinion: why not, then, combine the two in one? The idea pleased him, and he dwelt upon it. He pictured to himself the husband for his niece—a powerful seaman, bronzed by exposure to the elements—an ocean athlete. Déruchette had not quite the same ideas of a husband as her uncle had; there was a tinge of romance in her dreams on that subject.

But on one point both uncle and niece agreed—that there was no necessity to hurry matters.

When the fact was thoroughly established that Déruchette was an heiress, suitors had presented themselves readily enough. Too much eagerness, however, does not always show that the wooer would make a desirable husband, and Lethierry knew

this well enough. He had a habit of grumbling out the old French proverb, "A golden maiden, a brazen lover," and he dismissed the suitors politely, making up his mind to wait, as also did Déruchette.

There was one curious trait in his character, and that was that he was not partial to the aristocracy. In this respect he was totally un-English. It is a difficult thing to believe, but it is a fact, that he had gone so far as to refuse a Ganduel of Jersey and a Bugnet Nicolin of Sark, both of whom had proposed to Déruchette. People had the audacity to assert that he had declined the proposals of marriage from a family residing in Aurigny, and that he had dismissed a scion of the house of Edou, who could, doubtless, trace his pedigree to Edward the Confessor.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### AN AWKWARD TRAIT IN LETHIERRY'S CHARACTER.

MESS. LETHIERRY had one fault, and many considered that a very serious one: he hated a priest. There was nothing personal in this feeling; it was not the man that he detested, but his profession. One day, when he was reading—for he did read—Voltaire—for he read Voltaire—these words, "Priests are cats," it caused him to throw down the book and mutter between his teeth, "Then I wish that I were a dog." We must take into consideration that, at the time of the building of the Devil's Boat, the whole army of priests—Catholics, Protestants, and Dissenters—had violently opposed its construction, and had subjected its builder to a species of persecutions. We have not concealed from the reader that, in the eyes of these reverend gentlemen, the attempt to revolutionise the art of navigation, to make the Norman Archipelago a theatre of progress, and to try new inventions in the poor little island of Guernsey, was an act of abominable rashness, almost allied to heresy; and, therefore, they had not hesitated to condemn it pretty severely.

We are speaking of the Guernsey clergy of the last generation, not the present clerical authorities, who lead the way in all matters of social progress. In a hundred different ways they had cast stumbling-blocks in Lethierry's way, and had even employed the pulpit as an engine of opposition. Disliked by the clerical body, he, in his turn, hated them, and their treatment of him was some excuse for his doing so.

But we must allow that his hatred for priests was, to a certain extent, an element of his nature. Even had they not disliked him he would have had a prejudice against them. As he remarked, he was the dog, and they were the cats. From his mode of thinking he was antagonistic to them, and his natural instincts led him in the same path; he saw their half-concealed claws, and boldly showed his teeth. Sometimes it must be allowed that he behaved a little unreasonably. It is wrong to make no exceptions, and to hate a whole class is a mistake. The Savoyard priest would not have found favour in his sight. Lethierry did not believe that there could be such a thing as a good priest. His philosophy was often wound up to a pitch which deprived him of taking a clear view of the case. There is a bigotry amongst the most tolerant as well as the intolerance of those of liberal ideas. But Lethierry was so naturally good-humoured that he could not be a really good hater. He avoided people more than he attacked them, and kept the parsons at a distance. They had injured him, and all he did was to refrain from expressing good wishes on their behalf. The practical difference between the two hatreds was that theirs was animosity, and his antipathy.

Small as the island of Guernsey is there are two religions in it—the Catholic and the Protestant. Nowadays they do not use the same building for the two religions. Each belief has its own church or chapel. At Heidelberg, however, they are not so particular, and have divided a church into two parts—half for Saint Peter and half for Calvin. A partition prevents the rival sects from coming to blows; the Catholics have three altars as well as the Protestants, the services are at the same hours, and the same bell calls the different congregations to worship. It rings at the same time for God and for the Devil. This is one way of simplifying matters.

The national German calmness tolerates such close quarters; but in Guernsey each religion has its own peculiar home. There is the orthodox church and the heretic church. You can belong to which you like, or to neither of them, and this was the choice which Mess. Lethierry made.

This seaman, this artisan, this philosopher, this son of toil, though simple in manner, was shrewd and acute in reasoning; he had his prejudices and his opinions. On the subject of the priests he was immovable. Montlosier was nothing to him. He would, at times, make very ill-placed jokes, and used expressions which sounded rather quaint. Thus he called confession

"combing out one's conscience." He had a smattering of learning, which he had picked up during the intervals between storms and calms; and he made errors in pronunciation which sometimes almost appeared intentional. And when, after Waterloo, peace was signed between Louis XVIII. and Wellington, Mess. Lethierry said, "*Bourmont a été le traître d'union entre les deux camps.*"

But his abhorrence of Papal doctrines did not conciliate the Protestants. The Rector liked him just as little as the Priest did. His contempt for religion broke out in the very face of the most essential canons of the Church. Once chance had led him into church where the Reverend Jacquemin Herodo was preaching a magnificent sermon on the terrors of hell, crammed from one end to the other with texts from Holy Writ, proving eternal punishment, tortures, damnation, and inexorable chastisements; fire without ceasing, everlasting curses, the wrath of the Almighty, heavenly anger, and Divine vengeance, to be matters concerning which not a shadow of a doubt remained. As Lethierry was leaving the building, after listening to the sermon with the greatest attention, he was heard to murmur, "What a mistake I have made! Up to this time I had thought that God was merciful."

This leaven of Atheism he had become imbued with during his residence in France.

Although a thoroughbred Guernseyman, he was nicknamed the "Frenchman" in the island, because of his *improper* ideas, which he did not attempt to conceal. He was full of notions for upsetting existing arrangements. His obstinacy in building the Devil's Bent proved this. He used to say, "I was suckled by '89." If this was the case it cannot be said that he was reared on wholesome milk. There were many other things against him, for it is most difficult to remain neutral in a country place. To live a peaceful life you have, in France, *to keep up appearances*; in England, *to be respectable*. To be respectable implies a whole crowd of observances: from keeping the Sabbath holy to putting on a clean necktie. "Never to have a finger pointed at you" is another terrible law. To be pointed at is a sort of miniature interdict. Gossip is nowhere so rampant as in small towns, where malignity punishes its victims by isolation, and resembles the thunders of the Church seen through the small end of an opera-glass.

The bravest dread this; they will face shot and shell, or wind and wave, but they fly ignominiously before the tongue of

scandal. Mess. Lethierry was more obstinate than logical, but, under this compulsion, even his firmness gave way. He put, to use one of his strange phrases, "a little water in his wine;" that is to say, he kept aloof from the clergy, but did not decline to receive them in his house. On official occasions, and at the seasons upon which pastoral visits were made, he received, in an equally courteous manner, either the Lutheran minister or the Popish priest, and occasionally he would escort Déruchette to the Protestant Church, to which she only went on the four great festivals of the year.

But all these compromises of conscience cost him many a pang, and, far from making him more friendly with the priesthood, widened the breach between them, and he recompensed himself by a little more scoffing.

This was the only uncharitable trait in his nature; in all other points he was kind and generous, and there was no means of curing him of it, for it was an essential point of his nature, and utterly beyond his own control.

The ministers of every form of religion were distasteful to him. He had that want of reverence for sacred things which men picked up during the Revolution. He considered there was no distinction between one sect and another. He made no allowance even for the great step in advance that had been taken—the refusal to believe in a Real Presence. His culpable blindness in religious matters prevented his seeing any difference between a minister and a priest. He mixed up *reverend fathers* and *reverend doctors* indiscriminately. He used to say "*There was not a pin to choose between Wesley and Loyola!*" If he saw a clergyman walking with his wife, he would turn his head aside and mutter, "A married priest!" in those satirical tones which conveyed so much to the ear of a Frenchman at that date.

He was fond of telling how, on a visit to England, he had seen the "*Bishops of London!*" His anger at these kind of marriages was excessive. "Gown does not marry gown!" he would cry out. The priesthood was, in his opinion, a kind of sex, and his expression would certainly have been, "Not a man or a woman, but a priest!" With decided bad taste, he applied the same insulting epithets to the Protestant clergyman and the Catholic priest, and classed both cassocks under the same head. Whether they were Catholic or Protestant, he took no pains to alter the rough phrases which were applied to them at that period; and his constant injunction to Déruchette was, "*Marry whoever you like, so long as it is not a parson!*"

## CHAPTER XIII.

## CARELESSNESS ADDS A CHARM TO BEAUTY.

IF Lethierry once said anything he remembered it; Déruchette forgot everything the moment after it was uttered. This was the difference between uncle and niece.

Brought up in the manner we have described, Déruchette had no sense of responsibility. There is a hidden danger in a system of education which has not been based on sufficiently strict principles. It is an act of imprudence to make your children happy at too early an age. Déruchette had an idea that as long as she was pleased all would go well, and she knew how delighted her uncle was to see her happy. She had imbibed many of Lethierry's opinions, and considered that four annual visits to the Parish Church were quite sufficient. We have met her in her Christmas toilette. She was entirely ignorant of the realities of life, but was of the temperament to love passionately some day. In the meantime she was happy. She sang as the fancy seized her, and talked in the same manner; went straight ahead, throwing a word or two to the passers-by, came and went at her own sweet will, and enjoyed all the English custom of freedom. In England the very infants go alone; maidens are their own mistresses, and womanhood has the reins given to her. Such are the habits of the country. Later on, the girls, once so free, become slaves. I am speaking figuratively. Free in belief, but slaves to duty.

Each morning Déruchette awoke from sleep without a thought of what had passed the day before. She would have been puzzled to tell you what had happened during the last week. This, however, did not prevent her from having in her hours of depression a certain mysterious feeling of melancholy, and to experience a dark shadow in her happiest hours.

But such clouds passed quickly away. The deeper the blue of the sky, the more the dark clouds show. She would shake off such feelings with a gay laugh, never for a moment knowing why she had been sad, or the reason that she had recovered her happiness. She was always joking, and was fond of teasing the passers-by and of playing tricks on the boys. If Satan himself had passed that way she would have played some



prank upon him. She was pretty and innocent, and took advantage of both qualities. She was as ready with her smile as a cat is with her claws. So much the worse for those that were scratched, for she thought no more of them. Yesterday had no existence in her imagination; she lived but in the present.

This is the effect of being too happy. Recollection vanished from Déruchette's heart like last winter's snows.

## BOOK IV.

## THE PIPES.

## CHAPTER I.

## GLEAMS OF SUNRISE OR OF FIRE.

GILLIATT had never spoken to Déruchette. He knew her from having seen her at a distance, as we see the morning star. At the time when Gilliatt saw Déruchette on the road to Saint Pierre Port, and she surprised him by writing his name upon the snow, she was only sixteen years of age. The evening before, Lethierry had said to her, "Now, remember, no more tricks, for you are getting quite a woman!"

The name "Gilliatt," written by a maiden's hand, had stirred up the depths of a hitherto unfathomed abyss. What did Gilliatt know about women? They were frightened at him when he met them, and he had much the same feeling. He never spoke to a woman, unless he could not help himself, and had never *kept company* with any of the girls of the neighbourhood. When he saw a woman coming towards him he would scramble over a hedge, or hide himself in some thicket. He even avoided old women. Once in his life he had seen a lady from Paris. A Parisian lady was a rare sight in Guernsey at that time, and Gilliatt had heard her deploring her misfortunes. "How sad! There are some rain spots on my bonnet, and rain marks apricot colour so terribly." Some time afterwards he found, between the leaves of a book, an engraving, representing "A lady of the Chaussée d'Antin in full dress," and he had nailed it on the wall of his room as a remembrance of the fine lady he had met.

On the Christmas morning upon which he met Déruchette, and when she had laughingly written his name upon the snow, he returned home, hardly knowing why he had gone out, and when night came he could not rest. When he sunk to sleep a thousand strange dreams haunted his couch: that it would be a good thing to sow some black radishes in his garden; that the

crop was a profitable one; that he had not seen the boat from Sark, and wondered if anything had happened to it; that he had seen the white stone crop in blossom, which was rare at that time of year. He had never known for certain if the dead woman was really his mother, but believed that must have been so, and thought of her with increased affection. Then he began to think of the women's clothes in the trunk. Then he wondered whether the Rev. Jacquemin Herode would be appointed Dean of Saint Pierre Port, or surrogate to the Bishop, and if the living of Saint Sampson would become vacant. He thought that the day after Christmas would be the twenty-seventh day of the moon, and that it would be high water at twenty minutes past three, half ebb at fifteen minutes past seven, and low water at nine thirty-three, and half-flood at thirty-nine minutes past twelve. He remembered every detail of the costume of the Highlander from whom he had purchased the pipes. His bonnet, with the badge of the thistle in it, his broadsword, the short, tightly-fitting jacket, with square lappels to it, his kilt and sporrau his snuff mull, his pin set with a Scotch pebble, his two girdles and his cross belts, his dirk in its black sheath, ornamented with the cairngorms, and his skene dhu worn in the garter; his bare knees, chequered hose, and shoes and buckles. The soldier's dress became a perfect night-mare, and almost drove him into a fever until, towards morning, he sank to sleep. When he awoke his first thoughts were of Déruchette. The next night he slept better, but the Highlander still haunted his dreams. He recollected, in the midst of his visions, that the sittings of the Law Courts would commence on the 21st of January. He also dreamed of the rector, Jacquemin Herode. When he awoke he again thought of Déruchette, and this time he was highly incensed against her, and wished that he was a boy again, so that he might go and break her windows with pebbles. Then he remembered that if he was a boy his mother would still be alive, and this set him weeping.

He had designed to go and spend three months at Chousey, or at the Minquiers, but he gave up the project.

He never walked upon the road which led from Saint Pierre Port to Valle.

He had an idea that his name still remained where it was written, and that the passers-by stopped and looked at it.

## CHAPTER II.

## STEPPING INTO THE UNKNOWN.

BUT if he did not walk on the road to Valle, he had the pleasure of seeing Les Bravées every day; he did not go that way for the sole purpose, but he seemed always to have some business that took him through the lane that led by Déruchette's garden wall.

One morning he heard a market-woman, coming out of Les Bravées, remark to another: "Mess. Lethierry is fond of sea-kale." He went home immediately and made a sea-kale bed in his garden. Sea-kale is a vegetable somewhat resembling asparagus.

The walls of the garden at Les Bravées were low, and easy to climb over. The idea of scaling them would have appeared very terrible to him, but he had the same privilege as other passers-by of hearing the voice of those who were talking in the house or in the garden. He did not listen, but still he heard.

One day he heard Grace and Douce quarrelling. Their voices really belonged to the house, and remained like music in his ears. On the following day he heard another voice, which certainly was not a servant's, and seemed to him to be Déruchette's own, and at once he ran off.

The words that he had heard remained for ever impressed upon his memory, and he kept repeating them continually. They were: "Please give me the besom." By degrees, he grew bolder, and ventured to stop by the wall. It occurred one day that Déruchette was playing the piano. She was invisible to him, but he could hear her through the open window; then she began to sing "Bonnie Dundee." He grew very pale, but plucked up his courage, and remained listening.

Spring came, and Gilliatt had a vision of bliss; it was to him as though the heavens had opened. He saw Déruchette watering the lettuces.

And now he began to do more than merely stop. He learned her habits, marked her hours, and waited for her, taking good care not to show himself. As the year rolled on, when the shrubberies were full of roses and butterflies, hardly daring to draw his breath, and unseen by anyone, he accustomed himself to see Déruchette moving backwards and forwards in her garden. A man can grow used to poison if he takes it in small doses.

From his hiding-place he could sometimes hear Déruchette talking with Mess. Lethierry under an arbour, in which there was a bench. He could catch their words distinctly. To what a length he had gone! Now, he came to pry and to listen. Alas! there is something of the spy in every human heart. There was another seat at the end of a walk, much nearer to him, which he could see. Déruchette sometimes sat upon this seat. From the flowers which he saw Déruchette pick he learned what perfumes she liked best; the wallflower was her favourite, then came the pink, next the honeysuckle, and, lastly, the jasmine. She did not appear to care much for the roses, and looked at the lilies without attempting to smell them.

Gilliatt endeavoured to read her character from her tastes. To each perfume he attached some charm on her part. The very idea of speaking to Déruchette made the hair on his head bristle. A good old collector of odds-and-ends, whose peripatetic business took her occasionally in the lane behind the garden wall of Les Bravées, had remarked the assiduity with which Gilliatt took up his station behind the wall, and the attraction which this lonely spot appeared to have for him. Did she connect the presence of a man upon one side of the wall with the possibility of there being a woman on the other? Did she perceive the slender, half-invisible thread? In her decrepid mendicancy had she sufficient youth left to remember by-gone days, and could she, in the gloomy winter of her life, still recognise the bright dawn of love? We do not know; but once, as she passed Gilliatt at his post, she muttered, endeavouring to twist her features into a smile, "It grows warm."

Gilliatt heard her, was struck by her words, and repeated them continually to himself. "It grows warm!" What did the old woman mean? Half mechanically he repeated the words again and again during the day, but could not comprehend their meaning.

One evening, as he sat at his window in the Bû de la Rue, five or six young girls from Ancrese came down to the creek of Houmet to bathe, and, not suspecting that any one was watching them, began, in perfect confidence, to sport in the sea. Gilliatt slammed his window violently, feeling that he could not look on such a sight.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### "BONNIE DUNDEE" FINDS AN ECHO IN THE HILL.

THERE was a spot behind the enclosure of the garden of Les Bravées where the wall formed an angle, almost hidden by holly and ivy, half filled with nettles and wild mallow, and white lichen piercing its way through the crevices of the stone walls, where Gilliatt passed the greater portion of the summer day lost in thought. The lizards grew accustomed to his presence, and basked on the sunny stones without taking any notice of him. The summer days were bright and the air soft, whilst over his head the fleecy clouds came and went. Gilliatt sat down on the grass; the air was tuneful with the music of the birds. He rested his forehead in his hands and asked himself, "Why did she write my name on the snow?" The breeze from the sea blew softly over the land, and from the distant quarries of Vaudue could be heard the horn of the workman warning the passers-by that a blast was about to take place. From the spot where he sat the harbour of Saint Sampson was not visible, but he could see the tall masts of the vessels lying in it, above the tops of the trees. The seagulls flew hither and thither. Gilliatt had heard his mother say that women could love men—that such things happened sometimes. He remembered this, and said to himself, "I understand—suppose Déruchette is in love with me!" Then a feeling of deep sadness crept over him, and he murmured: "Perhaps she, too, is thinking of me." He remembered that Déruchette was rich and that he was poor, and decided that a steam boat was an abominable invention. He could not remember the day of the month, and stared helplessly at the great bumble-bees, with short wings and black and yellow bodies, who went in and out of the holes in the wall with a humming sound.

One evening Déruchette had gone up to bed, and approached the window to close it. The night was very dark. Suddenly she heard something, and listened attentively. Through the night she heard sounds of music; it was someone on the hill, or, perhaps, beneath the towers of the Chateau de Valle, playing tunes upon some instrument. Déruchette recognised her favourite air of "Bonnie Dundee" played upon the pipes. After listening awhile she closed the window, and thought no more of the matter.

## CHAPTER IV.

"A tune 'neath the window may please the fair,  
But of uncle and guardian, prythee take care!"

Four years had passed away.

Déruchette was nearing her twenty-first birthday, and was still unmarried. Some one has written that a fixed idea is like a gimlet, and that every year gives it a turn and sends it in further. To pull it out the first year is like tearing your hair out by the roots; the second year you bring away skin and flesh; the third year it feels as if your bones were broken; and on the fourth as though your very brain was being scooped out.

Gilliatt was, as it were, in the fourth stage.

He had, as yet, never said a word to Déruchette.

He only dreamed of her.

Once, when, by chance, he was at Saint Sampson, he had seen Déruchette talking with Mess. Lethierry in front of the door of Les Bravées, which opened on to the harbour. Gilliatt ventured to approach pretty close to them. He fancied that he could almost have been certain that she had looked upon him with a smile. There was nothing impossible in such an idea.

From time to time Déruchette heard the sound of the pipes.

Mess. Lethierry also heard it, and had remarked the persistency with which this minstrel played under Déruchette's window. The tunes were tender ones, too, which aggravated the offence. A lover who serenaded his niece by night was not at all to his taste. He wished Déruchette to marry at a proper time, when he and she were ready, and to make it a perfectly simple affair, without any romantic trash or music. Irritated at all this, he kept a strict watch, and at last fancied that he had detected Gilliatt. He passed his fingers through his whiskers—his usual indication of wrath—and growled out, "What has this animal got to pipe about? He is in love with Déruchette, that is clear; but he is losing his time. The man that wants Déruchette must come direct to me, and not play the flute under her windows." An important event, that had long been looked forward to, now took place. It was announced that the Reverend Jacquemin Herode had been appointed surrogate of the Bishop of Winchester, dean of the island, and rector of Saint Pierre Port, and that he would leave Saint Sampson as soon as he had handed over the parish to his successor. The new rector was expected daily. He was a gentleman of Norman family, the Rev

Ebenezer Caudray. A few facts were known about the new rector, which were commented on, according to the dispositions of the talkers. He was young and poor; but he was very learned for his age, and, in spite of his present poverty, had great expectations from an uncle, the wealthy Dean of Saint Asaph, who, when he died, would leave him very well off. Mons. Caudray belonged to a very good family, and narrowly escaped the prefix of "honourable" to his name. As to his belief, people differed. He was an Anglican, but, according to Bishop Tillotson's expression, a "libertine,"—that is to say, very extreme in his views. He repudiated all pharisaical practices, and was in favour of the Synod rather than the Episcopacy. His dream was a Primitive Church—one in which an Adam had the right to choose his Eve, and where Frumentanus, the Bishop of Hierapolis, carrying off a young girl to make her his wife, said to her parents: "She desires it, and so do I. You are no longer her father or her mother; I am the angel of Hierapolis, and she is my wife. Her father is in heaven." If reports are to be believed, the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray made the text, "Honour thy father and thy mother," subordinate to that which said, "The woman is the flesh of the man; she shall quit father and mother to follow her husband." This tendency to limit the parental authority and to give religious sanction for freedom in forming conjugal ties is peculiar to all varieties of his the Protestant religion in England, and particularly so in the United States.

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## CHAPTER V.

### WELL-DESERVED SUCCESS IS ALWAYS HATED.

THIS is how Mess. Lethierry stood at the present moment. The Durande had amply fulfilled all the hopes that had been entertained concerning her. Mess. Lethierry had paid his debts; repaired the breaches made in his fortune by Rantaine; discharged the claims against him at Brême, and met his bills at Saint Malo. He had, besides, paid off the mortgages on Les Bravées, and had redeemed the land-tax. He was the proprietor of the Durande, a vessel which brought in an annual income of about one thousand pounds, and there was every chance of his gaining an even larger sum than that. Strictly speaking, the Durande was his only source of income; she was also of great



benefit to the island. As the cattle trade brought him the largest profits, he had been compelled, in order to facilitate the entrance and exit of the animals, to do away with the places for storing luggage on the decks, and with the two gigs. Perhaps this was imprudent, as the only boat that was left to the Durande was the long boat, but this was a very good one. Ten years had passed since Rantaine's robbery and flight.

The weak point in the Durande's successful career was that it inspired no confidence. People thought that it was only a lucky hit, and Lethierry's luck was looked upon as a mere chance. An attempt had been made at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, to imitate him, and the venture had turned out most disastrously, ruining all the shareholders. Lethierry said that the boat was badly built. But at this they shook their heads. Novel undertakings are never popular, and the slightest accident injures them greatly. One of the commercial oracles of the Norman Archipelago—Jauge, the banker—on being consulted as to the advisability of an investment in steamers, turned his back, remarking, "It is a conversion that you propose to me; a conversion of your money into smoke." On the other hand, sailing vessels could always obtain freight. The capitalists were obstinately in favour of canvas against boilers. In Guernsey the Durande was a fact, but steam was not yet fairly established—so strong is prejudice against progress. People said of Lethierry, "He has been fortunate, but these things are not to be done twice."

His success, far from encouraging people, alarmed them, and no one would have ventured to start a second Durande.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE RESCUE OF THE SHIPWRECKED.

In the Channel the equinoctial gales begin to blow early. The sea is narrow and the winds soon lash it into fury. From the beginning of February the westerly winds commence, and the sea runs high. Navigation becomes perilous. The fishermen watch the signal post, and look out for ships in distress. The sea is like an ambush—a clarion announcing an invisible warfare. Furious storms of winds sweep the horizon, and a tempest soon springs up, whistling and howling through the dark night. In

the depths of the clouds the fierce hurricane prepares to blow. Wind is one danger, and fog another. From time immemorial fogs have been dreaded by sailors. In certain fogs microscopic prisms of ice are found suspended, to which Marriott attributes halos, parhelions, and paraselenes. Storm-fogs are composites, being formed of various gases of unequal specific gravity, combined with vapour from the water, in layers, which divides the fog into zones, and makes it a solid formation. Below is iodide, above the iodide is sulphur, and above that brome and phosphorus. This, making allowance for electric and magnetic tension, explains various phenomena, such as the fires of Saint Elmo, spoken of by Columbus and Magellan; Seneca's flaming stars moving about the vessel, and the twin lights of Castor and Pollux, which Plutarch speaks of; the Roman Legion, whose spears Cæsar thought were tipped with flame; the ornamental ironwork on the Chateau of Duino, in Friuli, which the sentinel, by a mere touch of his lance, caused to send out flashes of fire; and, perhaps, for those lights which emanate from the earth, which the ancients called Saturn's terrestrial lightnings. At the equator there is a permanent band of mist round the globe, called the "cloud ring." The use of the cloud ring is to lessen the heat of the tropics, as the gulf stream is to warm the waters at the Poles. Under the cloud ring the fog is very dangerous. These are what are called the "horse latitudes." The navigators of ancient times used to throw horses overboard, in storms, to lighten their ships, and in times of calm to economise the supply of water. Columbus said "*Nube abaxo es muerite*:" a drooping cloud is fatal. The Etruscans, who bore away the palm for meteorology, as the Chaldeans did for astronomy, had their chief priests—one for thunder and one for the clouds; the "fulgurators" watched the lightnings, and the "aquileges" the fogs. The College of Priest Augurs, founded by the Tarquins, was consulted by the Syrians, the Phœnicians, the Pelasgians, and all the early mariners of the inland seas. The formation of storms was well understood at that time. It is intimately connected with the formation of fogs, and is, properly speaking, derived from the same source. On the ocean there are three foggy zones—one equatorial, and two polar. Sailors have but one name for all this, "The Black Pot."

In all latitudes, and especially in the Channel, the equinoctial fogs are particularly dangerous. One of the chief perils of the fog is that it hinders sailors from recognising the changes in the bed of the sea by the altered colour of the water, preventing

them from perceiving when they are approaching sands or breakers; and so a vessel is aground without the slightest warning. Often ships, enveloped in a fog, have no recourse but to lay-to, or anchor. There are as many marine casualties in a fog as in a storm.

After a heavy gale which succeeded one of these foggy days, the mail boat *Cashmere* arrived in safety from England. She entered harbour in the early morning, just as the gun from Castle Cornet announced the sunrise. Everyone had been anxiously expecting the arrival of the *Cashmere*, as she was to have brought the new Rector of Saint Sampson. Shortly after her arrival a report was spread through the town that during the night she had been hailed by a boat in which were some shipwrecked mariners.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A NARROW ESCAPE.

THAT night, when the wind had gone down, Gilliatt went out to fish, keeping tolerably close to the coast. About two o'clock in the afternoon the tide was coming in rapidly, and he was making his way back, when, passing before the Horn of the Beast, he fancied that he perceived a shadow, not thrown by any projection of the rock. He steered his boat in that direction, and saw a man seated in the chair of Gild-Holm-'Ur. The tide was already very high, and the rock surrounded by the sea, so that escape was not possible. Gilliatt waved his hands to the man, but he took no notice of him. Gilliatt drew nearer, and saw that he was asleep.

The man was dressed in black. "He looks like a priest," thought Gilliatt, and as he came nearer he saw that he was quite a young man; but he was a stranger to him.

Fortunately, the rock was very perpendicular, and there was deep water close under it, so that Gilliatt was enabled to bring his boat alongside. The rising tide lifted the boat, so that Gilliatt, by standing on the gunwale, could reach the man's feet. He raised himself to his full height and stretched out his hands. If his foot had slipped there would have been a poor chance of his ever coming to the surface again. The waves were foaming in, and the position was most critical.

He pulled the sleeping man's foot. "What are you doing here?" cried he.

The man woke up. "I had been looking at the view," answered he, sleepily.

He was now wide awake, and continued: "I have just landed," said he, "and passed this rock as I was walking. I had been all night at sea, and, feeling weary, I sat down and fell asleep."

"Ten minutes more, and you would have been drowned," said Gilliatt.

"Really!"

"Jump into my boat."

Gilliatt maintained the boat in its position with one foot, and, clinging to the rock with one hand, he offered the other to the black garbed stranger, who sprang actively into the little vessel. He was a handsome young man.

Gilliatt seized the oars, and in two minutes the boat was at its anchorage beside the Bû de la Rue. The stranger had on a tall hat and a white necktie; his long frock coat was buttoned up to his throat; his fair hair was brushed back from his forehead; he had a face of almost feminine beauty, a clear eye, and a grave manner.

Gilliatt moored his boat safely, and, turning round, saw the white hand of the young man extended to him with a sovereign in it.

Gilliatt put the hand gently aside. There was a short pause, and then the stranger broke the silence. "You have saved my life," said he.

"Perhaps I have," answered Gilliatt.

The mooring was now completed, and they disembarked.

The young man continued, "I owe you my life, sir."

"We will not speak of that," replied Gilliatt.

Gilliatt's answer was again followed by a pause.

"Do you belong to this parish?" asked the stranger.

"No," answered Gilliatt.

"Where is your parish?"

Gilliatt pointed towards the heavens, and simply answered, "There!"

The stranger bowed, and left him. After proceeding for a few steps, he stopped, felt in his pocket, and, taking a book from it, offered it to Gilliatt.

"Will you accept this?"

Gilliatt took it; it was the Bible! Resting his elbow on the

parapet of his garden wall, he watched the stranger disappear, round the corner of the road that leads to Saint Sampson.

In a few minutes all recollection of the events of the last few minutes had passed from his mind—the stranger, the chair of Gild-Holm-'Ur and all; for there was only one continued line of thought that he now pursued, and that was Déruchette.

A voice calling him by name aroused him from his reverie.

"Hey, Gilliatt!"

He raised his eyes as he recognised the voice. It was Sieur Landoys.

"What is it?" asked he.

For it was Sieur Landoys, who was driving along the road in his little one-horse trap. He had pulled up for a minute to speak to Gilliatt, but he seemed anxious and hurried.

"There is something new, Gilliatt."

"Where?"

"At Les Bravées."

"What is it?"

"I am too far off to tell you."

Gilliatt shuddered.

"Is Miss Déruchette going to be married?"

"No, but she ought to be."

"What is it, then?"

"Go to Les Bravées, and you will find out."

And Sieur Landoys whipped up his horse.

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## BOOK V.

## THE REVOLVER.

## CHAPTER I.

## HOW THEY TALKED AT THE AUBERGE JEAN.

SIEUR CLUBIN was one who could wait for his opportunity. He was a short man, with a sallow complexion, and with the strength of a bull. The sea air had never succeeded in tanning him; he was the colour of a wax-candle, and some of its steady light gleamed in his eyes. He possessed a curiously retentive memory. Only let him see a man once, and he would know him again anywhere, as if he had a portrait of him in his note-book. His steady gaze caught all the salient points in a moment. He took stock of a face at a glance, and it was impossible to throw him off the trace. Sieur Clubin did not talk much; his manner was cold, but he was prompt in action; his demeanour was singularly quiet. Everyone was attracted by his frank and open manner, and thought him simplicity itself. As we before said, he was a thorough seaman. No one was quicker than he at taking in a reef, keeping her a point nearer the wind, or taking advantage of the breeze. No one possessed a higher character for religion and integrity than he did. To have suspected him would have caused you to be looked upon as something not quite right yourself. He was on most intimate terms with Mr. Rebuchet, the money-changer, who lived at Saint Malo, in the Rue Saint Vincent, next door to the gun-maker. Mr. Rebuchet frequently said, "*I could trust Clubin with all my shop.*" Sieur Clubin was a widower; his wife had always borne as high a character as he had done. She had left behind her a most honourable reputation. If the chief magistrate had attempted to flirt with her, she would have laid her case before the King. Sieur Clubin and his wife had, in Tor-teval, the reputation of being thoroughly respectable. Swans' down was not whiter than Madame Clubin's character, nor ermine than that of her husband—a single spot would have been

fatal to either of them. He would not retain a pin which he might chance to pick up, and he would have sent the town-crier round if he had found a box of matches. One day he went into a cabaret at Saint Servan, and said to the proprietor, "Three years ago I had breakfast here, and you did not charge me sufficient," and he returned sixty-five centimes, which was the amount of the error in the bill. He was a perfect model of honesty, whilst his tightly-closed lips showed that he was never off his guard.

He seemed always on the watch. What for? Most likely for rogues.

Every Tuesday he sailed the *Durande* from Guernsey to Saint Malo. He arrived there on the evening of the same day, lay there two days to discharge his cargo and take in a fresh one, and left for Guernsey on Friday morning.

At that time there was, close to the harbour of Saint Malo, a small tavern, called the Auberge Jean. The construction of the new quays have demolished this house, leaving no traces of it. At this period the sea used to reach the gates of Saint Vincent and Dinan; the communication between Saint Malo and Saint Servan was maintained at low tide by carts and various species of vehicles which plied between the vessels which were lying high and dry, and avoiding the buoys, anchors, and cables, and risking sometimes coming into collision with a yard or a jib-boom. Between high and low tides the coachmen drove their horses over sands which, six hours afterwards, were overspread by foaming billows. On these same sands formerly wandered the twenty-four porter dogs of Saint Malo, until they were suppressed, owing to their having, in a mistaken access of zeal, eaten a naval officer in 1770, and their nocturnal barking is now no longer heard between the great and little Talard. *Sieur* Clubin always stopped at the Auberge Jean, and it was there that the French officers of the *Durande* had their location.

The Custom-house officers and coastguardsmen used to take their meals at the tavern, where a table was always reserved for them; and the officers of the Customs from Binic found it convenient to make it a meeting-place with their brethren from Saint Malo. The captains of vessels also frequented the place; but they, too, had a table of their own. *Sieur* Clubin sat sometimes at one table and sometimes at another; but, as a rule, he preferred that of the Custom-house officers, though he was welcome at either. The tables were well appointed, and there were all kinds of strange liquors ready, in the event of their

being called for by foreign sailors. A dandy Spaniard from Bilbao would not have been deprived of his *helada*. You could get as good stout as could be procured at Greenwich, and it was very common to see the brown beer of Antwerp on the table. Captains who had returned from long voyages and shipowners often sat at the chief table, and news of all kinds were interchanged:—"How are sugars?"—"Only that commission for small lots; the brown kinds are doing well—three thousand sacks of Bombay, and one hundred hogsheads of Sagua. You will see the right will be too much for Villèle."—"How goes indigo?"—"Only seven surons of Guatemala have changed hands."—"The *Nanine Julie*, a pretty little three-master from Brittany, is coming in."—"They are at loggerheads again in La Plata."—"Whilst Monte Video gets fat, Buenos Ayres grows thin."—"They have had to discharge the cargo of the *Regina Caeli*, which has been condemned at Callao."—"Cocoas are brisk; bags of Caracas are quoted at two hundred and thirty-four, and Trinidads at seventy-three."—"I hear that the people shouted 'Down with the Ministers!' at the last review in the Champ de Mars."—"Green Saladero hides are selling—ox hides at sixty, and cow hides at forty-eight."—"Have they passed the Balkan?"—"What is Diebitsch about?"—"Aniseed is in demand in San Francisco."—"Olive oil is quiet."—"Gruyère cheese, in tins, is thirty-two francs the quintal."—"Well, is Leo the XII. dead?"—etc., etc.

All these topics were loudly and openly discussed; at the coastguard table, however, they spoke in lower tones. The doings of the revenue require a little more privacy. The captains' table was presided over by an old skipper of a large vessel—Mons. Gertrais Gaboureau.

Mons. Gertrais Gaboureau was not a man; he was a weather-glass. His experience of the sea had given him almost prophetic powers, and he could tell you what the weather would be like to-morrow. He listened to the winds, and, if we may so express it, felt the pulse of the sea. He would say to the clouds, "Put out your tongue,"—that is to say, the lightning. He was the physician of the wave, the breeze, and the squall; the whole ocean was his patient. He had made a kind of medical tour of the world, examining every climate, and making a note on it, either favourable or the reverse. He knew all about the diseases of the seasons. You heard him state facts like the following:—The barometer, in 1796, fell three degrees below storm point. He was a sailor, because he loved the sea,



and he hated England as much as he adored the ocean. He had carefully studied English shipping, and believed that he had discovered all its weak points. In explaining the differences between the *Sovereign* of 1637, the *Royal William* of 1670, and the *Victory* of 1755, he compared their upper works. He regretted the towers on deck, and the funnel-shaped tops of the *Great Harry* in 1514, probably considering that they would afford good marks for French gunners. In his opinion, nations were only great by their maritime strength. When he wished to speak of England, he used the words "Trinity House," considering that quite sufficient. "Northern Commissioners" did well enough for Scotland, whilst "Ballast Board" stood for Ireland. He was well posted in marine matters, and was a perfect naval alphabet and almanac. He was a tariff of freights and an authority on tides, all wrapped up in one. He knew by heart all the lighthouse dues, especially those upon the coast of England—one penny per ton for passing this one, one farthing per ton for that. He would tell you that the Small Rock Lighthouse, which formerly only consumed two hundred gallons of oil, now burnt fifteen hundred. One day, during one of his voyages, he was taken seriously ill, and his life was despaired of. When the crew surrounded his hammock, he interrupted the rattle in his throat to tell the carpenter to put mortices in each side of the maincaps, and fix in an iron ring to run the top ropes through. His habit of self-assertion had given him an air of authority.

There was generally no similarity in the conversation at the captains' table and that of the Custom-house officers'. The reverse, however, happened to be the case in the early days of the month of February, to which date we have arrived. The three-master *Tumaulipas*, commanded by Captain Zueta, trading between Chili and Saint Malo, attracted the attention of both tables. At the captains' they spoke of its cargo, at the Custom-house officers' of its appearance.

Captain Zueta de Copiapo was half Chilian and half Columbian. He had served in the wars of Independence, sometimes under Bolivar, and sometimes under Morillo, according to which side he thought was the most paying. He had gained money by serving all the world. No one could have been, at one and the same time more Bourbonist, more Bonapartist, more Absolutist, more Liberal, more Atheist, or more Catholic. He belonged to that showy faction called the Lucrative party. Every now and then he made his appearances in France—

nominally in connection with commercial matters, and, if rumour was correct, he was always ready to offer passages to fugitives of all descriptions—bankrupts or political refugees, it mattered not, as long as they had the necessary cash. His mode of embarking them was simplicity itself. The fugitive, on the day appointed, waited on some lonely part of the coast, and, when Zuela was preparing to set sail, he would send a boat on shore and bring him on board. In a former voyage he had aided a man named Berton to escape from justice, and this time it was said that he was in communication with the men mixed up in the affair of the Bidassoa; and the police, who had been warned of this, kept their eye upon him. The time was one of escapes. The Restoration had brought about a complete reaction; for as revolutions cause emigration, so restorations entail banishment. For the first seven or eight years after the restoration of the Bourbons, there was a season of universal panic—in finance, in manufactures, and in commerce—which made the very earth tremble, and brought about a number of bankruptcies. Political offenders all sought to escape. Lavalette, Lefebvre-Desnouettes, and Delon had all taken flight. The special tribunals treated people very harshly. People fled from the Bridge of Saumur, from the Esplanade of Réol, from the wall of the Paris Observatory, and from the Town of Taurias d'Avignon. History had planted at this period many a dismal landmark, and had erected memorials of a reaction upon which the traces of a blood-stained hand could be only too plainly distinguished. The trial of Thistlewood and his accomplices, which was going on in England, for a conspiracy, which had its adherents also in France; in Paris, where Trogoff was being tried—who had many sympathisers in Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy—an impetus had been given to the desire of escape, and had multiplied the disappearances which left so many gaps in society. To put oneself in security was the first thing, for to be compromised was to be lost. Martial law had its own way, and sentences were passed as desired. People fled to Texas, to the Rocky Mountains, to Peru, or Mexico. The men of the Loire, looked upon as brigands then, hailed as heroes to-day, had founded the Camp of Refuge. One of Béranger's songs says:—

“Red men, our glory do not scorn,  
For we are Frenchmen, all forlorn.”

Self-banishment was all that was left to many; but flight

is not always an easy thing. The man who is endeavouring to escape finds a thousand obstacles in his way. To conceal yourself means a disguise. Persons of position, and even of illustrious birth, were compelled to take a leaf from the books of criminals, and but too often they failed. Their habits, frankness, and independence, rendered it difficult for them to avoid the nets that were spread for those endeavouring to escape. A criminal who has broken the conditions of his ticket-of-leave is more likely to deceive the police than a general who has committed a political offence. Imagine innocence having to disguise its face; virtue counterfeiting another voice, and glory putting on a mask. That person, who has such a suspicious appearance, is a man of credit and position in search of a false passport. There is no proof that, because we see a man slinking away in his efforts to escape, we may not have a true hero before our eyes. There are many characteristic and fugitive traits of these times, which modern history has entirely left out, instead of marking them deeply, as she should have done. Taking advantage of the evasion of honest people come a crowd of rogues who are less closely watched. A villain, obliged to disappear, would take the opportunity and, profiting by the general confusion, endeavour to mix himself up with the mass of honourable exiles, and often, we will venture to say, thanks to his knowledge of the art of disguise, will seem, in the gloom, more like an honest man than the genuine article.

Nothing looks more awkward than innocence in the hands of justice. It does not understand its position, and commits a thousand errors. A forger would escape the law more easily than a political offender.

It is a strange fact, but self-imposed exile, especially among dishonest folks, seems to lead to many curious vicissitudes of fortune. The amount of civilisation which a rogue brings from London or Paris is of great service to him in some out-of-the-way country, and makes him a general favourite, and gives him another chance in life. A man may have escaped with difficulty from the clutches of the law in his own country, and reappear in some remote one, indeed, with all the dignity of a priest. The wildest flights of fancy hardly come up to the results of some of these disappearances, and more than one escape reads like a chance. An adventure of this sort often ends in the strangest manner, and a fraudulent bankrupt, who has sneaked

out of France, perhaps, returns, twenty years afterwards as the Vizier of the Great Mogul, or as a monarch in Tasmania.

To help these fugitives was a regular branch of trade, and, as there was plenty of business, it was very remunerative. This business was generally grafted on to some illegitimate mode of trade. Anyone, for instance, wishing to escape to England applied to the smuggling fraternity, whilst others, who desired to get to America, had recourse to captains of the stamp of Zuela.

## CHAPTER II.

### CLUBIN KEEPS HIS EYES OPEN.

SOMETIMES Captain Zuela came to take his meals at the Auberge. Sieur Clubin knew him by sight.

Clubin had no pride about him; he did not mind being acquainted, by sight, with rogues. Sometimes he was on friendly terms with them, shaking their hands in the open street, and wishing them good-day! He could talk English to the smugglers, and could hammer out a little Spanish in conversing with a contrabandista. He had various aphorisms on this subject, which he used to quote as an apology for the bad company that he sometimes kept. "Good," said he, "can be got from evil knowledge. The gamekeeper should be on good terms with the poacher. A pilot should take soundings of a pirate, who, after all, is a sunken rock. I analyse a villain as a doctor analyses a poison." No answer could be given to these, and all agreed that Captain Clubin was in the right. They approved his not being hampered with any feeling of preposterous delicacy. Who could blame him, when all he did was for the good of the service? He always acted in an honourable, straightforward manner, and would not, for anything or anybody, tarnish his reputation. Crystal might easier lose its brilliancy than he his character. The universal confidence that was placed in him was the result of a long life of honourable integrity and a well-founded reputation. Whatever Clubin did, or seemed to do, everything was done for the best, and people had got the opinion that it was impossible for him to do wrong. Everyone knew how careful he was of his reputation and acquaintanceships; that which would in others have given rise to suspicion caused

his honesty and skill to stand out in bolder relief than ever. This reputation for skill combined well with the character that he enjoyed—his perfect simplicity and candour was much in his favour. Simplicity joined to skill and ability does exist. They are some of the traits that distinguish an honest man, and are highly appreciated. Sieur Clubin was one of those men whom you might meet in company with a swindler or a robber, but this would in no way affect your opinion of him, and you would discreetly close your eyes as to the character of his associates, according to him the full measure of your esteem. The *Tamaulipas* had completed taking in her cargo. She was ready for sea, and would sail almost immediately.

On Tuesday afternoon the *Durande* arrived at Saint Malo while it was still daylight. Sieur Clubin was standing on the bridge, and piloting the vessel into harbour, when he perceived on the sands of Petit Bay two figures, half concealed between some rocks, in a solitary part. Using his glass he recognised in the one Captain Zuela, and also seemed to know his companion, who was a tall man, with hair tinged with grey. He wore the broad-brimmed hat and the sober dress of the Society of Friends. He was most likely a Quaker. He cast down his eyes with an air of modesty. Upon arriving at the Auberge Jean, Sieur Clubin made enquiries, and learned that the *Tamaulipas* would most probably sail in ten days.

It was afterwards found out that he obtained information regarding other matters.

That evening he called in at the gunmaker's, in the Rue Saint Vincent, and said :

"Do you know what a revolver is?"

"Yes," answered the gunsmith, "it is an American invention."

"It is a pistol that re-commences the conversation?"

"You are right; it is good for both question and answer."

"Yes, and has another reply ready."

"And, in addition, Mons. Clubin, a revolving chamber."

"With five or six bullets in it?"

The gunsmith smacked his lips and nodded his head in token of his admiration.

"The weapon is a good one, Mons. Clubin, and it will do excellent service."

"I want a six-chambered revolver."

"I have not got one."

"And you call yourself a gunmaker?"

"I have not got one in stock yet; you know that it is an

entirely new invention. It is only just coming into use, and French makers still keep to the common pistol."

"Absurd!"

"It is hardly in the market."

"Rubbish!"

"I have capital pistols."

"But I want a revolver."

"I quite agree with you that it is the most useful; but stop a moment, Mons. Clubin."

"Well, what is it?"

"I think I can lay my hand upon one in Saint Malo that can be had a bargain."

"A revolver?"

"Yes."

"For sale?"

"Certainly!"

"Where is it?"

"I believe I know, but I will make enquiries."

"When can you give me a reply?"

"It is second-hand, but of excellent quality."

"When shall I call in again?"

"If I get you a revolver, remember that it will be a first-rate one."

"When will you give me an answer?"

"On your return from your next trip."

"Do not say that it is for me," remarked Sieur Clubin.

### CHAPTER III.

CLUBIN TAKES SOMETHING AWAY AND BRINGS NOTHING BACK.

SIEUR CLUBIN superintended the loading of the *Durande*, got on board a quantity of cattle and a few passengers, and quitted Saint Malo for Guernsey, as usual, on Friday morning. As soon, however, as the vessel was fairly out at sea, and he was able to leave the bridge, he went down to his cabin, and, taking a travelling bag, put into it some clothes, biscuits, some pots of preserves, some sticks of chocolate, a chronometer, a marine telescope, and, locking the bag, passed a cord through the handles to carry it by. Then he went into the hold, and from thence to cable tier, from which he brought a cord, with knots at regular intervals

and a grappling hook at the end, which is used by ships' caulkers at sea, and by burglars on shore, for assisting them to climb. On his arrival in Guernsey, Clubin went to Torteval, where he remained thirty-six hours. He took away his bag with him, and did not bring it back. Let us again repeat that the Guernsey of which we speak in this book is the old Guernsey; that at present, places that we allude to do not exist, and, save in the interior, it is impossible to find any traces of former times. I hear they are still to be found there, but in the towns they have passed away. This allusion that we make with regard to Guernsey holds good also for Jersey. Saint Helier is now as fine a city as Dieppe, and Saint Pierre Port as L'Orient. Thanks to the spirit of progress, and to the admirable feeling of enterprise amongst these insular people, great changes have taken place in the Channel Islands during the past forty years. Where there had been darkness, there is now light. With these remarks let us get on with our narrative.

In those times, which, as they have passed away, may be said to have become historical, smuggling was carried on in the Channel to a very large extent. Free Traders abounded, especially upon the west coast of Guernsey. Persons who are acquainted with everything, and know to half-an-hour what happened fifty years back, go so far as to quote the names of many of these vessels, which were chiefly Asturian and Guiposcoan ones. What is tolerably certain, however, is, that hardly a day passed without one or two running into the Bay of Saints or Plainmont. They acted with great regularity, as though they formed part of a legitimate service. A cavern on the sea-coast of Sark was, and is still, known as the "Shops," because it was there that people came to buy their goods of the smugglers. To carry on this traffic there was a kind of smugglers' language spoken in the Channel, which has now fallen into disuse, and was to Spanish what the *Lingua Franca* is to the Italians. Upon many points of the coast of both France and England the smugglers were on the best of terms with legitimate and open traders. They had access to the houses of more than one pillar of commerce—by the back door, certainly—and they had a mysterious connection with the mercantile world and with the many varied lines of industrial manufacturers. Merchants on one side and smugglers on the other was the way in which many large fortunes had been acquired. Seguin states this of Bourgain, and he throws back the accusation upon Seguin. We do not vouch for the truth of either statement: so both may be

false. However that may be, smuggling, denounced by the laws of the country, was secretly supported in financial circles. It had its connections in "the best society." The retreat in which Mandrin, the brigand, occasionally met the Count de Charolais had a sufficiently respectable appearance, and looked well enough from the street.

All this secrecy, however, required much connivance and management, and its mysteries were shrouded in impenetrable gloom. A smuggler had a good many secrets, which he well knew how to keep. Strict and inviolable secrecy was his first duty. No loyalty, no smuggling! Fraud has its secrets as well as the confessional. Its mysteries were jealously guarded. No one was more worthy of confidence than a smuggler. The Alcade of Oyarzun once captured a smuggler, and had him put to the torture to reveal the name of the capitalist who supplied the sinews of war. In point of fact, the Alcade was the capitalist, but the smuggler kept his secret. These two men each performed their duty—the Alcade, in applying the torture; the smuggler, in keeping his oath. The most renowned of the smugglers who, at this period, frequented Plainmont were Blasco and Blasquito; these men were *Tocayos*. This is a species of Spanish and Catholic connection, which consists in men having the same patron-saint in Paradise—a matter, it will be allowed, not less worthy of consideration than having the same father upon earth. When you wished to do a little quiet business with the smugglers nothing was easier, or, from a certain point, more difficult. If you were not afraid of a dark night you had only to go to Plainmont and consult the mysterious being who was to be found there.

## CHAPTER IV.

### PLAINMONT.

PLAINMONT, near Torteval, forms one of the corners of the Island of Guernsey. At the extremity of the Cape is a grassy hill, which commands an extensive view of the sea. It is a very lonely spot, which does not look the less lonely because there is a house upon it. This house adds a feeling of terror to that of solitude.

It is reported to be haunted.

Haunted or not, it has a very strange appearance. It is a



one-storeyed house, built of granite, and stands alone on the summit of the hill. It is in perfect repair; the walls are thick, and the roof watertight. Not a stone is wanting in the walls; not a tile to the roof; a brick chimney-stack stands up at an angle to the roof. The house has its back to the sea. On closely examining this wall, you will discover a bricked-up window. The two gables have three windows—one to the east and two to the west—all walled up. The front that looks inland has a door and two windows; the door is bricked up, as are also the two windows on the ground floor. On the first floor—and this is what strikes you as you approach the house—are two open windows, but the walled-up windows have a less weird and ghastly appearance than these. They look black and dismal even in the light of day; there is not an atom of glass or sash in them. They simply open on the darkness within. They resemble the sockets of the eyes from which the balls have been torn. The house is perfectly empty. Through the yawning crevices you can perceive that within all is ruin and desolation. No wainscoting, no woodwork; but only bare stone walls. You can imagine it to be a tomb, with two open windows, to permit its ghastly tenants to gaze out upon the world. On the side next to the sea the rain has washed away the earth from the foundations. A crop of nettles, that quiver with every breath of wind, grow thickly round the house. There is no other dwelling in sight. It is an empty house, and in it dwells Silence; but if you stand and put your ear against the wall you will distinguish a strange, confused sound, like the flutter of wings. Above the bricked-up door on the keystone are engraved these letters, "E L M — P B I L G," and this date, "1780." During the night the pale moon shines through the gaping windows, and the glowing night holds the deserted house in its embraces. The sea is seen on all sides of the house. Its situation is simply magnificent; but for that very reason it has the more terrible aspect, and its very beauty becomes a species of riddle. Why is there no human tenant? The situation is beautiful, and the house a good one. Why has it, then, been deserted? Added to these questions, which so naturally suggest themselves, are others, which are the offspring of the thoughts which the house inspire. The land round is capable of cultivation. Why, then, is it not cultivated? Is there no owner? and why the bricked-up doorway? What is the matter with the place? Why do men avoid it? What has happened here? If nothing has happened, why are there no inhabitants? When

others are sleeping is there anyone awake *here*? Gloomy tempest, wind, birds of prey, wild animals, unknown shapes—all suggest themselves as your thoughts linger on the lonely dwelling. What wayfarers use this as an hostelry? You can picture the torrents of rain and hail that pour through its unprotected windows. Storm and tempest have left their imprints on the interior walls. All the rooms, whether walled-in or open, have felt the hurricane's blast. Has a crime been committed here? It seems as if this house, abandoned to darkness, solitude, and gloom, might lift up its voice and cry for aid. Does it always remain thus mute? Do voices ever issue from it? What does it here in this lonely spot? Is it the home of mystery? If the place inspires a feeling of terror in the broad light of day, what must it do when night spreads its pall over nature? As we gaze upon it we feel that we are looking upon a secret. Dreams, which have a logic of their own, demand what this house may be between the shades of evening and the coming of the dawn. Has the supernatural world some connecting link with this deserted spot, which compels it to halt, descend, and make itself visible here? Do the scattered fragments of the world of spirits gyrate round its walls? Does the invisible take form and substance here? Riddles, which cannot be answered. The very stones inspire feelings of holy awe. The shadow that lurks in these deserted chambers is more than a shadow—it is the unknown. When the sun has set, the song of the birds will be stilled; the barques of the fishermen safely moored; the goat-herd will lead his goats homewards from the distant hills; the snake, rejoicing in the coming darkness, will creep through the crevices of the rocks; the stars will begin to peep out; the breeze will die away, and gloom fall over all. Yet those two open casements will still be there. Are they open to welcome the denizens of the unknown world? Are they peopled by indistinct phantom forms—by ghostly faces shining in a lurid light? Can the mysterious sounds of shadowy souls be heard? Is there no way of arriving at the connection of this house with the world of darkness?

It is a haunted house; this covers everything.

The superstitious have one explanation; those possessing common sense another. The latter says, "Nothing is more simple. It is an old observatory, and, in the times of wars of the Revolution and the Empire, and in the days of smuggling, when there was no further use for it, it was abandoned. The authorities did not pull it down, because it might again prove useful at some

future time, but simply bricked up the lower doors and windows to prevent people getting in and damaging the interior; whilst the windows on the other side were, of course, walled up, on account of the south and west winds. It is a very simple matter, after all."

But the superstitious will have their say. "In the first place, the house was not built at the time of the Revolution; it bears the date 1780—some time before it. Besides, it was not erected for an observatory, because it has the letters "E L M—P B I L G" on it, which are the double monogram of two families, and which indicate, according to custom, that the house was meant for a newly-married pair. Therefore, it had been inhabited; and why is it now deserted? If the doors and windows have been walled up so that no one can get into the house, why have they left two of the latter open? They should have closed all or none. Why are there no shutters, window-frames, or glass? If they bricked up the windows on one side, why did they not do so on the other? They prevent the rain coming in on the south, but allow it to penetrate from the north." The superstitious, no doubt, are wrong, but that does not prove that those who argue on the side of common sense are right. What is certain is that the house has done more good than harm to the smugglers.

The growth of superstitious fear prevents facts from being looked at in their true light. Doubtless, many of the nocturnal phenomena, which have, little by little, earned for the house the reputation of being haunted, could be explained by the clandestine visits and brief sojourn of sailors, and sometimes by the precaution or daring of certain suspicious characters, whose deeds will not bear the light, and who make a point of keeping up the evil reputation that the house has achieved.

At the period of which we write many things were possible to the bold and daring, as the police—especially in remote parts—were not so effective as they now are. If the house was, as report asserted, a meeting-place for smugglers, it was a convenient one—for the reason that it had a bad name. Having a bad name, no one thought of reporting it. You do not give information to either Custom-House officers or police about ghosts. Superstitious people cross themselves or murmur a prayer, but they do not take out summonses or warrants. "They see something—or believe they see something—take to flight, and hold their tongues. There is a certain silent connivance—perhaps involuntary, but certainly real—between those who are afraid and those who are the cause of their fears. Those who have been alarmed

feel that they were foolish to have been frightened ; they think that they have hit upon a secret, and they fear to aggravate a position already uncomfortable for themselves by initiating the apparition. This tends to make them reticent. And, besides all this, every feeling of instinct amongst the incredulous leads them to silence. Dread is allied to muteness, and frightened people are always reticent. It seems as if the first effect of horror is to make those who have experienced the feeling cry " Hush ! " It must be remembered that our story goes back to the times when the Guernsey peasants believed that the mystery of the manger was acted every year, on its appointed day, by the oxen and asses—so much so that on that date no one dared to enter the stable for fear of finding the animals on their knees.

If we are to believe local tales and stories, popular superstition went the length of suspending from the walls of the house at Plainmont upon nails—the traces of which we can still perceive—rats without feet, bats with no wings, and the bodies of other dead animals ; toads crushed between the pages of a Bible ; bunches of the yellow lupin and other strange offerings were also placed there by those who, having been imprudent enough to approach the premises after nightfall, imagined that they had seen something, and who hoped by these sacrifices to appease the resentment of the evil beings that haunted the spot. In all times there have been believers in demonology and witchcraft, and sometimes they have occupied very high positions. Caesar, consulted Saganus, and Napoleon, Madame Lenormand. There are some who have such scruples that they must seek for indulgence from even Satan himself. " May heaven do it, and Satan not undo it ! " was one of Charles the Fifth's prayers. Other dispositions are even more timid. They have attained to the pitch of persuading themselves that they may sin against the Devil, and one of their most ardent desires is to give Satan no cause of complaint against them. This feeling is the origin of those religious prejudices directed towards the evil powers of darkness. These are acts of bigotry, like many others. Sins against the demon exist in certain morbid dispositions. The notion that they have broken some law of the realm below is frequently a source of anxiety to the ignorant arguers on the side of superstition, and they are terrified at the idea of having offended some demon. A belief in the efficacy of paying adoration to the Mysteries of the Brocken and Armuyr, and a conviction that they have sinned against the powers of hell, induces them to endeavour to atone for an imaginary sin by a real act of penance. To confess the

truth to the Spirit of Falsehood, to cry *mea culpa* before the Father of Evil, and to confess in an inverse sense, have all existed, and may exist even now, for the trials of sorcerers prove it in every leaf of their proceedings. Human imagination attains great heights. When once a man is terrified he goes beyond all bounds. He dreams of imaginary acts of sin and of imaginary atonements, and sweeps out his conscience with the shadowy broom of the wizard.

However this might be, the old house kept closely whatever secrets were entrusted to it. No one went near it to find them out, for there are few who care to run the risk of encounters with beings of another world. Thanks to the feeling of terror, which acted as a guardian, and which caused all those who wished to examine and enquire into matters to keep their distance, it was at all times easy to enter it by a rope-ladder; or, more simply, by a ladder taken from any of the adjoining fields. A store of clothes and provisions would enable anyone to wait until something favourable turned up—such as a clandestine embarkation, or anything of a similar nature—in the most perfect safety. There is an old tale that, forty years back, a political refugee—according to one story, and a fraudulent bankrupt according to another—remained for a long time concealed in the haunted house, until he got a chance of crossing to England, from whence it was easy to procure a passage to America. The same story says that the provisions which he left behind him remained in the house without anyone touching them—Lucifer, no doubt, like the smugglers, hoping that anyone who has once come there will return again. From the top of the hill upon which the house is situated, the reef of the Hanois can be seen about a mile and a-half from the coast, in a south-west direction. This rock has an evil reputation; it has done all the harm that a rock can possibly do. It is one of the most dreaded murderers of the ocean. Like a midnight assassin, it lies in wait for ships. It has filled the cemeteries of Torteval and Rocquaine.

In 1862 a lighthouse was erected upon the rock.

Now, the Hanois lights the vessels to safety, when before they lured them to destruction. This murderous trap now holds out a friendly torch, and from afar off the mariner seeks to discover the rock, which he looks on as an open friend, and no longer as a hidden foe. There are three Hanois—the Great Hanois, the Little Hanois, and the Mauve. The beacon which has a red light is upon the Little Hanois. These peaks form a bed of rocks, some of which are above the water, whilst others

are submarine; they tower high above them, and have, like a citadel, their advanced works. On the sea-side there is a line of thirteen rocks; on the north, two rows of breakers—the Hautes Fourquies, the Aiguillons—and a sandbank; on the south side, three rocks—the Cat Rock, the Percée, and the Roque Herpin—besides two mud-banks—the South Bank and the Mouet Bank; and before Plainmont, just visible above the surface, is the Tas de Pois d'Aval.

It is difficult, though not impossible, to swim across from the Hanois to Plainmont. We have mentioned that this was one of the feats of Sieur Clubin. The bold swimmer who is well acquainted with his route can avail himself of two resting-places—firstly, the Round Rock, and, by bending off a little to the left, the one called the Red Rock.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SEEKERS FOR NESTS.

It was on the Saturday, or very near to it, that Sieur Clubin passed at Torteval, that we must refer to a strange occurrence that took place, which was for some time kept quiet; for, as we may remark, many things were not repeated, from the dread that they caused to those who witnessed them.

On the Saturday or Sunday night, then—we are as exact as we can be with regard to the date—three boys climbed up the hill at Plainmont.

Three children were on their way to the village, and came from the sea-shore. They were what is called, in the local tongue of the island, *déniquoiseaux*, or birds'-nesters. Everywhere, where there are cliffs, with rifts and cavities in them, birds'-nesters abound. We have before mentioned that Gilliatt used to endeavour to prevent the children from robbing the nests, out of consideration for both birds and children.

The birds'-nesters are regular young mermen, and not troubled with much timidity.

It was very dark, and a mass of clouds obscured the vault of heaven. Three o'clock had just struck from the belfry of Torteval, which is round, and pointed like a magician's hat. Why were these children returning home so late? Nothing was more simple: they had been in search of seagulls' nests

## THE WORKERS OF THE SEA.

in the Tas de Pois d'Aval ; the season having been an exceptionally mild one, the birds had begun to pair early. The children had been watching the male and female birds fluttering round their nests, and, carried away by the excitement of the sport, had forgotten the time. The tide had surprised them, and they had been unable to gain the little creek in which their boat was moored, and had had to seek refuge on one of the higher portions of the rock until the tide went down. This was the reason for their returning home so late.

These delays in returning to the domestic hearth cause the expectant mothers the deepest anxiety, and, when their minds are set at rest, they usually show their joy by an outburst of anger, and dry their tears by giving the truants a few sound boxes on the ear. And so, trembling for their reception, the boys hastened homewards; but with that kind of haste which takes every opportunity of delaying, and which checks the moment of arrival at their destination; for they were sure of a reception in which a kiss would be certainly followed by a shower of blows. One alone amongst them had nothing to fear, for he was an orphan—a French boy, without father or mother—and at that moment he felt rather proud of not having parents; for no one had sufficient interest in him to beat him. The two other boys were Guernsey born; indeed, they came from the parish of Torteval. When they had climbed the hill they came upon the platform on which the haunted house stood. They began by being frightened, which is the right thing for anyone, especially a child, to be when in such a situation at such an hour.

They were divided between the desire to run off as fast as their legs could carry them, and to stop and see the place.

They stopped.

They looked at the house.

It was black and terrible-looking.

There it stood in the midst of the deserted landscape, a black mass of gloom; a symmetrical and hideous excrescence; a square, lofty object, with right-angled corners, something like an enormous altar dedicated to the darkness.

The boys' first idea had been to fly; the second, to draw nearer. They had never visited the house at this hour. Fear sometimes induces a species of curiosity. They had a little French boy with them, which gave them courage to draw nearer.

It is well known that Frenchmen and boys believe in nothing.

Besides, companionship in danger has a reassuring effect, and to have three comrades all in a state of alarm gives courage. And, then, they were hunters, not to be dismayed by any perils; they were boys, not thirty years among the whole of them; they were accustomed to search, to spy out things that were hidden, to hunt about, and were they to stop short? They were in the habit of putting their heads into holes. Why not into this one? There is a species of excitement in tracing out things; he who goes on a voyage of discovery is always on tenter-hooks. Looking into birds'-nests gives one a desire to see the place where the ghosts roost; why should they not take a peep into hell?

Going from one kind of game to another, we, at last, come to the Devil; after hunting sparrows, we chase hobgoblins. Now they will know how much truth there is in all those stories that their parents have told them. How easily we glide down the slope of ghost-tales when our inclinations lead us to inquire into them; also to have long stories to tell, like the old woman, is a great temptation. All this varied mixture of ideas filled the brains of the Guernsey birds'-nesters with confusion, and resulted in raising their courage to a pitch of rashness, and they once more drew nearer to the house.

The boy who inspired them with so much courage was a worthy chief. He was a bold young fellow, a caulker's apprentice, one of those boys who had already become men: sleeping in the yard upon a bundle of straw, earning his own living, having a loud voice, and never hesitating to climb over walls and up trees, and caring very little whose property the apples were that he saw in the orchards as he walked by—one who had worked in a yard for the refitting of men-of-war—a child of chance, a boy that had been picked up anywhere, a merry orphan, born in France, no one knew where, which were two reasons for his being courageous, not hesitating to give a copper to a beggar—very naughty, very good, with carrotty hair, and having had the advantage of speaking to people from Paris.

At that time he was gaining a shilling a day by caulking the fishermen's boats which were being repaired at Pêqueries. When he thought he should like a holiday he took one, and went birds'-nesting. Such was the little French boy.

There was something funereal in the dead silence that surrounded them. They felt its threatening inviolability. It was wild and weird. The bare and desolate plateau terminated abruptly in a steep precipice. The sea beneath was calm. Not a blade of grass quivered in the breeze. The young birds'-



nesters approached slowly, the French boy at their head, and came nearer to the house. One of them afterwards relating the story, or as much of it as he could recollect, said, "*It did not speak.*" They still continued to advance, holding their breath, as one does when approaching a savage animal. They had ascended the hill on the seaward side of the house, where the ground ran down to a little rocky isthmus, almost inaccessible, and had now got pretty close to the building; but they only had a view of the south side, all the apertures in which were closed up, for they had not dared to turn to the left, which would have brought them in front of the terrible open windows. But, plucking up courage, the caulker's apprentice murmured, "Steer to port, that is the handsome side; let us have a look at the two black windows."

They steered to port, and came to the other side of the house.

The two windows were lighted up.

The boys took to their heels at once.

When they had gone some little distance, the French boy stepped, and turned round.

"Hulloa!" said he; "the lights are out."

He was right; the windows were as dark as ever, and the outline of the house could be seen as sharply defined against the livid sky as though cut out by a punch. Terror had not entirely fled, but curiosity resumed her sway, and the boys returned towards the house.

Without any warning, both the windows were again illuminated.

The two boys from Torteval scampered off, but the little imp of a French boy, though he did not advance, made no attempt at flight.

He remained motionless, facing the house and gazing earnestly upon it.

The light went out, then flashed up again. Nothing could be more dreadful.

The reflection of it made a faint streak of light upon the grass, wet with the night-dew. Suddenly, through the light, he saw, upon one of the inner walls, black shadowy profiles, with huge heads. As the house was without ceilings or partitions, and there being nothing but the four bare walls, both windows showed any light there might be in the interior. Seeing the French boy stood his ground, the two other young birds'-nesters crept back one after the other, trembling with fear, but still curious.

"There are ghosts in the house," whispered the caulker's

apprentice; "I saw the nose of one of them." The two boys from Torteval shrunk behind their companion, and, standing up on tiptoe, peeped over his shoulder, using him as a shield, and, encouraged by having some one between them and the ghost, looked at the house with all their eyes.

The building, in its turn, seemed to glare upon them. It stood out stark and grim in the silent darkness, with two blazing eyes. These were the two windows on the upper floor.

These unearthly lights, caused, possibly, by the opening and closing of the entrance to the infernal regions, showed themselves for a time, and then disappeared again. The windows of the tomb seemed to act like a dark lantern.

All of a sudden a thick, black shadow, having some resemblance to a human shape, showed itself at one of the windows, as if it came from without, and disappeared into the interior of the house. Spirits have a habit of entering houses by the windows. For an instant the light grew brighter, and then disappeared entirely. The house was once more buried in darkness. Then sounds were heard issuing from it; these sounds resembled human voices. This is invariably the case; when there is anything to be seen, there is silence; when there is nothing, we hear sounds. There is something awe-inspiring in the silence of night at sea. The silence of darkness is deeper there than elsewhere. When there is neither wind nor wave on that wide-stretching plain of water, over which, at other times, the eagles' flight makes no sound, we can hear the passage of a fly. This silence of the tomb gave a melancholy relief to the sounds that issued from the house.

"Let us go nearer and have a look," said the little French boy, and he made a few steps towards the house. The two others were so frightened that they made up their minds to follow him; they dared not run away by themselves. As they passed a huge heap of faggots, which, for some unknown reason, appeared to encourage them, a great white owl flew out of a bush, with a loud rustling of the branches. Owls have an awkward kind of flight, a sort of sidelong movement, suggestive of mischief. The bird passed close to the boys, gazing upon them with its big eyes, shining brightly through the darkness.

The two boys behind shuddered, but their leader addressed the owl. "You come too late, my bird: I *will* look."

And he advanced boldly.

The crackling sound made by his heavy-nailed boots among the bushes did not prevent them from hearing the sounds

from the house, which rose and fell with all the deliberate intonation and continuity of a dialogue. The French boy added, "Besides, only fools believe in ghosts!"

Contempt for danger gives courage to the most pusillanimous, and incites them to valour.

The two Torteval boys continued to approach the house, following the steps of the caulker's apprentice.

The haunted house seemed to grow larger. In this optical illusion of fear there was something of reality. The house grew larger because they were getting nearer to it.

Meanwhile, the voices in the interior sounded clearer and more distinct. The children listened to them. The sense of hearing has its power of exaggeration. The sound was not a murmur, more than a whisper, and not a hullabaloo. Now and then an occasional word or two could be distinguished; but it was impossible to understand them, for they seemed spoken in a strange tongue. The boys stopped and listened, and then began to advance again.

"The ghosts are talking," said the French boy; "but I do not believe in ghosts."

The children from Torteval had half a mind to conceal themselves behind the heap of faggots, but these had been now left far behind, and their friend, the caulker, continued to advance towards the house. They trembled at remaining with him, but did not dare to quit his protection.

Step by step they went on in the greatest perplexity.

The French boy turned to them every now and then, saying, "You know that it is not true, and that there are no such things."

The house grew taller and taller, and the sounds became more distinct.

They drew nearer.

On approaching, they perceived that there was a shaded light in the house. It was a very faint light, like that produced by a dark lantern, but the faint glimmer that it gave reminded one of the illumination at a meeting of witches and wizards.

When they were close under the walls they stopped.

One of the boys from Torteval hazarded a remark. "They are not ghosts, they are women dressed in white."

"What is that hanging from the window?" asked the other.

"It looks like a rope."

"It is a snake."

"It is a hangman's halter," said the French boy, with an air

of authority. "They always use one; but I do not believe in them, for all that."

And, more with three jumps than three steps, he was at the foot of the wall. Such an act of audacity must have been the offspring of delirium. The other boys imitated him in fear and trembling, pressing up close to him, one on his left and one on his right.

They placed their ears against the wall of the house, and could still hear the talking going on.

This is what the ghosts were saying:

"So that is agreed on?"

"It is."

"Settled?"

"Settled!"

"A man will wait here, and Blasquito will undertake to carry him over to England?"

"He will pay him?"

"Yes, he will pay him."

"Blasquito will take the man on board without asking where he comes from?"

"That is no concern of his."

"Without wanting to know his name?"

"We have nothing to do with names; purses are in our line."

"Good! The man will wait in this house."

"He will want something to eat."

"He will have it."

"Where will he get it?"

"From this bag that I have brought."

"Very good!"

"Can I safely leave the bag here?"

"We are smugglers, not thieves!"

"When do you sail?"

"To-morrow morning. If your man was ready he could have gone with us."

"But he is not ready."

"He knows his own business."

"How many days will he have to wait in this house?"

"Two, three, four days, more or less."

"Is Blasquito sure to come?"

"Perfectly sure."

"Here to Plainmont?"

"To Plainmont."

"In what week?"

"Next week."

"What day?"

"Friday, Saturday, or Sunday."

"He will not fail you?"

"He is my *Tocayo*."

"Weather will not prevent his coming?"

"He is out in all weathers, and is afraid of nothing. I am Blasco, he is Blasquito."

"Then he will not fail to come to Guernsey?"

"I come here one month, he the next."

"I understand."

"Counting from Saturday last, one week from to-day, five days will not pass without Blasquito coming."

"But if there is much sea?"

"Bad weather, do you mean?"

"Yes."

"Blasquito will come all the same, but not so quickly."

"Where is he coming from?"

"Bilbao."

"Where is he bound for?"

"Portland."

"Good!"

"Or to Tor Bay."

"That would be better."

"Your friend may make himself easy."

"Blasquito will not disappoint him?"

"It is only cowards that are traitors; we are brave men. The sea is the church of the winter, treason is the church of hell!"

"Can anyone hear what we are saying?"

"It is equally impossible either to see or hear us. Terror is our safeguard!"

"I know that."

"Who would dare to come here and listen to me?"

"True!"

"Besides, if any one came and listened to us, how much wiser would he be? We speak a strange language, which few comprehend. Since you can speak it, you must be one of ourselves."

"I only came to make arrangements with you."

"That is all right."

"And now I am going away."

!!

"Tell me, should the passenger wish Blasquito to land him elsewhere than at Portland or Tor Bay?"

"Let him offer more money."

"Then Blasquito will do as he wishes."

"Blasquito will do anything for money."

"How long will it take to make Tor Bay?"

"It depends on the wind."

"Eight hours, eh?"

"About that time."

"Will Blasquito consult the passenger's wishes?"

"If the sea consults Blasquito's."

"He shall be well paid."

"Gold is gold, and wind, wind."

"That is true."

"A man with gold in his hand does what he wishes. God does what he likes with the wind."

"Well, then, the man who wishes to sail with Blasquito will be here on Friday."

"Good!"

"What time will Blasquito come?"

"At night. We always arrive and leave in the night. We have a wife who is called the Sea, and a sister who is called Night; the first sometimes deceives us, the latter never."

"Then all is settled. Good-night, my lads!"

"Good-night. Have a drop of brandy?"

"Thank you."

"That is better than a glass of syrup."

"I have your word, then?"

"My name is *Keep Your Promise*."

"Farewell, then!"

"You are a gentleman, and I a caballero."

It was plain that only devils would talk like this. The children did not listen for another word, but this time took to their heels in earnest, the little French boy—believing at last—running quicker than the rest.

The Tuesday following this Saturday, *Sieur Clubin* returned in the *Durande* to Saint Malo.

The *Tamaulipas* was still anchored in the roads.

*Sieur Clubin*, between the puffs of his pipe, asked the landlord of the Auberge Jean, "When will the *Tamaulipas* sail?"

"Thursday—the day after to-morrow."

That evening *Clubin* supped at the coastguard-men's table, and, contrary to his usual habit, went out directly after supper. He was, therefore, absent from the office, and the *Durande* missed some freight. This was remarkable in a man generally

so exact and business-like. He had a few minutes' conversation with his friend, the money-changer. He returned to his lodgings after Noguette had tolled the curfew. Ten bells were struck on board the *Tamaulipas*: it was therefore just midnight.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE JACRESSARDE.

FORTY years ago there was in Saint Malo a narrow lane, called Coutanchez Alley. It is no longer in existence, having been pulled down to make way for improvements in the town.

It consisted of a double row of houses, leaning over towards each other, with a narrow gutter between them, which formed the street. If you stretched out your legs you could walk on both sides of the gutter at once, touching, with your head or your elbows, the houses on each side. These tumble-down buildings—relics of the Normandy of the Middle Ages—had a strange similarity to the human face. Witchcraft and ruins run pretty close together. These stories, leaning one over the other, their sloping roofs, low-pent houses, and rows of iron bars, took the form of lips, chin, nose, and eyelids. The garret-window made it look like a one-eyed face. The wall is the cheek, all wrinkled and covered with pimples. The houses upon each side of the way lay their heads together, as though they were plotting some villany; all the slang of the crimes of ancient days, such as *cut-purses*, *slit-weasand*, *nimmer*, and the like, pass across your mind as you gaze on these memorials of the past. One of the houses in the alley—the largest, the most famous, or, rather, the most infamous—is called the Jacressarde.

The Jacressarde was a lodging-house for those who do not lodge. In all cities—more especially in seaport towns—there is, below the surface of the lowest dregs of the population, a still lower depth. Unconfined vagabonds, upon whom justice can hardly lay hands; seekers after adventures, hunters of fortune, swindling chemists, who spend their lives over the robber's crucible; every form of rags and tatters, and a thousand indescribable ways of wearing them; the dried-up apples of dishonesty; lives which have become bankrupt; larcenies that have filed their schedules; fifth-rate men who have failed in house-breaking and burglary—for those who plan the robberies

move in a sphere above; workers in sin of both sexes—male and female rogues; vanished scruples and worn-out coats; villains in the last agonies of poverty; scoundrels whom roguery has poorly recompensed; men who have been wounded in the battle of life; the hungry, with nothing left to devour; paltry criminals—beggars in every sense of the word. Human instincts are there in all their bestiality; it is a heap of souls cast upon a mass of filth, heaped up in a corner, over which, from time to time, passes a broom, which is known as a police raid. Such are the ingredients that compose this living mass, and the Jacressarde of Saint Malo is the corner in which they are heaped up.

In memorable places of refuge like this the aristocracy of crime is seldom found, such as highwaymen or swindlers and the like results of ignorance and poverty. If murder finds a representative here, it is in the person of some creature brutalised by drink; robbery seldom rises higher than simple pilfering. It is more the expectoration of society than its vomit. The vagrant is to be found here, but not the robber of the highway. But on this point we must not be too confident. This last stage of vagabondism may serve sometimes as a refuge for criminals of a higher class. It was when the police cast their nets into the Epi-Scié, which was for Paris what the Jacressarde is for Saint Malo, that they captured the notorious Lacenaire.

These hiding places are open to all. A step in crime is a universal leveller. Sometimes, but rarely, honesty in tatters seeks an asylum there. Virtue and honesty do not always lead to soft beds and gilded chambers. We must not, at first starting, judge by appearances, either in the palace or the galleys. Public respect, as well as universal dislike, requires to be tested, and many surprising results are derived from so doing. An angel may sometimes be found in the haunts of vice, and a devil in a dunghill. Such gloomy discoveries are far from rare.

The Jacressarde was rather a courtyard than a habitation, and more of a well than a courtyard. It had no rooms looking into the street. The front to the street was simply a wall, with a gateway in it. By lifting the latch, and pushing the door, an entrance to the yard was at once attained. In the midst of the yard was a round hole, with a broken parapet round it. This was the well. The yard was small, and the well large. The courtyard was square, with rooms on three sides; only on the side facing the street there was nothing but the wall with the gate in it.



Anyone who at his own risk entered the court after the fall of night would have heard a strange sound of deep respirations. And if the light of the moon or the stars were sufficient, this is the sight that would have been presented to his eyes.

The court and the well; facing the door a lean-to of semi-circular shape; a worm-eaten wooden gallery, with a roof of rafters, supported on stone pillars, placed at unequal distances. In the centre was the well, and round it, on a bed of straw, was a kind of circular ring, formed of boots and shoes, torn and trodden-down at heel, toes passing through the holes, whilst the naked heels of some of the wearers were distinctly visible. The feet of men, women, and children, and all these feet slept.

Beyond these feet the eye could distinguish, in the half-light of the shed, bodies, hanging heads, forms stretched out in all the languor of indolence, bundles of rags of both sexes—a promiscuous gathering together of human refuse. This dormitory was open to all on payment of two sous per week. The feet of the sleepers were on the edge of the well. In stormy nights the rain poured in upon them, and on winter nights the wind drove the snow upon their undefended bodies.

Who were these sleepers? The nameless and homeless—they crawled in here at night, and crept away again with the dawn of day. The social fabric is composed of elements like these. Some of them crept in surreptitiously during the night, and so evaded payment. Food had not passed the lips of most of them during the day. Vice of every description, all kinds of moral infection, every species of distress had their representatives there. The same slumber crept over them, and the same bed of mud received them. The dreams of all of these sleepers were in close proximity. A terrible resting-place, where misery, weakness, drunkenness half recovering from its stupor, fatigue from unsuccessful wanderings to and fro without a morsel of bread, and filled with evil thoughts; pallor with closed eyes; remorse, covetousness, hair mingled with street sweepings, faces upon which death had set his seal, lips fresh from the kisses of hell—all lay festering and fermenting in one vast sink of putridity.

They had been driven to this refuge by some unlucky stroke of fate—the arrival of a ship in port, or by a jail delivery, by mere chance, or by the approach of night. Each day Destiny emptied them out of his sack. Enter who liked, sleep who could, talk who dared—for it was a place of whispers—fresh arrivals hastened to conceal their sorrows in sleep, as they could

not do so in the darkness. They took from death what they could; they closed their eyes to that turmoil of horrors which was daily renewed.

Where did they come from? Had society thrown off its scum, as the wave does its foam?

Everyone could not even get a fair share of the straw. More than one had to rest his bare limbs on the rough pavement. They threw themselves down, half dead with fatigue, and awoke cramped and aching in every limb.

The well, without a cover, and hardly protected by its broken parapet, yawned wide by night and day. The rain fell into it, refuse of all kinds gathered round it, and the gutters sent their filth filtering through its sides. The bucket to draw the water stood by the side. Those who were thirsty drank from it. Those who were weary of life cast themselves into the depths of the well. From the slumber of their filthy couch they glided into the slumber of death. In 1819 the body of a boy of fourteen years of age was found in the well.

To live safely in such a place it was necessary to be of the same stamp as the rest. Any attempt to be different excited suspicion.

Did these miserable wretches know each other? No; but they soon scented out an honest man in the Jacressarde.

The mistress of this place was a young woman, with some pretensions to good looks; she wore a cap, trimmed with ribbons, and occasionally washed herself with water drawn from the well. She had a wooden leg.

With early dawn the courtyard was empty, for its inmates had vanished.

In the courtyard was a cock and some hens, which scratched all day amongst the dirty straw. A horizontal beam was laid across the yard, supported by posts, looking like a gibbet, and thoroughly in keeping with the locality. Very often, after a rainy night, a silk dress, wet through and covered with mud, was hung up there to dry. This belonged to the woman with the wooden leg. Above the lean-to was another storey, and above that again a loft. A rickety wooden staircase passing through the roof of the lean-to led up to it, and up its shaking steps the woman would stagger, making a great deal of noise.

The occasional lodgers—either nightly or weekly ones—slept in the courtyard, the regular lodgers in the house.

In the interior of the house were windows without glass, door frames without doors, and fire-places without grates.

You could get from one room to another by passing through an aperture where the door had once been, or by a triangular opening in the partition, where the lath and plaster had fallen away from the uprights.

Fallen fragments of plaster from the ceiling covered the floor. It was hard to say how the old house held together—every gust of wind made it creak and tremble. The lodgers gained their rooms as best they could, by the worn and slippery steps of the staircase. Every room was exposed to the air. The winds of winter passed through it as water does through a sponge. A number of spiders' webs seemed all that held the place together. There was not an atom of furniture. Two or three mattresses, with their coverings torn in many places, showing more dirt than straw, lay in the corner of the rooms. Here and there was an earthenware jug and a pan, serving for all kinds of uses. There was a faint, disagreeable smell everywhere. The windows looked out in the courtyard. The view there resembled the interior of a scavenger's cart. The things, in addition to the human beings, which lay there festering and putrifying, were quite indescribable. The refuse seemed to crowd together, falling sometimes from the walls and sometimes from the human inhabitants. It seemed as if the ground had been sown with rags. Besides its floating population billeted in the courtyard, the *Jacressarde* had these lodgers: a charcoal man, a rag-picker, and a gold-maker.

The two former occupied two of the mattresses on the first floor, and the gold-maker lived in the loft, which, for some reason or other, was called the garret. No one knew where the woman slept. The gold-maker was something of a poet; he lived in the roof, right under the tiles, in a room which had a dormer window, and a great stone fireplace, down the chimney of which the wind howled lugubriously. His window having no frame or glass, he had nailed across it a piece of iron-sheeting, coming from the wreck of a ship; this, however, kept out the light, but let in the cold. The charcoal man paid his rent from time to time by a sack of the goods he dealt in. The rag-picker settled his, by a basin of grain for the fowls. The gold-maker never paid at all, and, in addition, burnt the very house for fuel. Little by little he had consumed all the woodwork in his room, and every day he would take some laths from the wall or the roof to make his crucible boil. On the wall above the rag-picker's bed might be seen a double column of figures, written in chalk every week, one column of 3's and another of 5's, according as the

grain was three or five liards the measure. The utensil of the "chemist" was an old broken shell, promoted by him into a crucible, in which he mixed his ingredients. The transmutation of metals took up all his time. Sometimes he would chat with the barefooted denizens of the court-yard, who laughed at his efforts; then he would say, "*These people are full of prejudices.*"

He was resolved not to die without breaking the window of science with the stone of philosophy.

His furnace consumed a great quantity of wood.

The banisters of the staircase had entirely disappeared; all the house was rapidly passing up the chimney. The proprietress often said, "You will leave me nothing but the empty shell,"

but he disarmed her resentment by making verses for her.

Such was the Jacressarde.

A boy of twelve or, perhaps, sixteen years of age, a kind of dwarf, with a large swelling on his neck, and a broom constantly in his hand, was the servant.

Those who used the place habitually entered by the door into the court, and the public by the shop.

What was the shop?

The high wall facing the street on the right of the door into the courtyard had a square opening, serving at once as a door and a window. This opening had a shutter and a frame, the only shutter in all the house which had hinges and bolts. Behind this opening was a very small room, formed by cutting off a portion of the lean-to. Over the door was written, in charcoal, "*Curiosities sold here.*"

On three planks, placed in the opening, were three china cups without handles, a Chinese parasol, made of goldbeater's skin, ornamented with figures, rather torn, and impossible either to open or to close, pieces of iron, and shapeless bits of pottery; dilapidated head-dresses of men and women, three or four shells, some packages of bone and copper-buttons, a snuff-box, on which was a portrait of Marie Antoinette, a dog's-eared volume of Boisbertrand's Algebra, and this was all the stock. The assortment itself was the *curiosity*.

The shop had a back door, leading into the yard, in which was the well. There was a table and a stool in it, and the woman with the wooden leg served at the counter.

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## CHAPTER VII.

## MYSTERIOUS BUYERS AND SELLERS.

CLUBIN had been absent from the Auberge Jean on Tuesday, and he was so again on Wednesday evening.

On that night, just about dusk, two men entered Coutanchez Alley and stopped before the Jacressarde. One of them rapped at the window. The shop door opened, and they entered. The woman with the wooden leg gave them the smile which she reserved for her best customers. There was a lighted candle upon the table. The men looked like two respectable townspeople.

The one who had rapped at the window said, "Good evening, missis; I have come about that business." The woman smiled again, and, opening the back door which led to the courtyard, went out. In a few moments a man presented himself on the threshold. He wore a cap and blouse, underneath which he had something concealed. There were bits of straw in his hair, and it seemed as if he had just been aroused from sleep. He made a step forward. All three looked at each other. The man in the blouse had an expression in which there was a mixture of embarrassment and cunning. At last he spoke.

"You are the gunmaker?"

The man who had knocked at the window replied by asking another question.

"You are the man they call the 'Parisian'?"

"Yes, and sometimes 'Redskin.'"

"Show it to me."

"Here it is," and from under his blouse he drew something that was very rare at that time—a revolver.

It was quite new and shining. The two men looked at it attentively. The man who seemed to know the locality, and whom the man in the blouse had spoken of as the gunsmith, tried the lock. He passed the pistol, at length, to the other, who had not the same cut of a landsman about him, and who kept his back turned to the light.

The gunsmith began again: "How much?"

The man in the blouse resumed. "I brought it from America. There are people who bring over monkeys, parrots, and all sorts of beasts, as if Frenchmen were savages. As for me, I brought this. It is a useful invention."

"How much?" repeated the gunsmith.

"It is a pistol that revolves."

"How much?"

"Crack! the first shot. Crack! the second. Crack!—a regular trail of them. It will do good work."

"How much?"

"It has six chambers."

"Well, well—how much?"

"Six chambers, that is six louis."

"Will you take five?"

"Impossible; a louis for each bullet, that is the price."

"Come, if you want us to deal, you must be reasonable."

"I have put a fair price upon it; just look at it, Master Gunsmith."

"I have looked at it."

"The chambers twist and turn like Talleyrand himself. A pistol like this ought to be put in the Dictionary of Weather-cocks. It is a real treasure."

"So I see."

"The barrel is of Spanish make."

"I have noticed that."

"And it is a twisted barrel, too. This is how they make the twists. They empty into the furnace the contents of a collector of old iron's basket. They fill it up with scraps of steel, broken horse-shoes, old nails, and —"

"And old scythe-blades."

"Just what I was going to say, Master Gunsmith. Then they bring it all to a good white heat, and this makes the grandest stuff for gun-barrels."

"Yes, but there may be cracks or flaws in it."

"So there may; but they remedy these by welding it well together, and give it two or three more turns in the furnace. Then they bring the big hammer to work. If it has been too much heated, they re-temper it with dull heats and light hammers; then they take it out and roll it well, and with it they manufacture a barrel like this."

"You have been in the trade, I see."

"I have been in all trades."

"The barrel is rather pale."

"That is one of its beauties; you get it that colour from using antimony."

"I am to give you five louis, then?"

"Permit me to observe, sir, that I had the honour to ask six."

The gunsmith took him aside and whispered to him, "Listen to me, Parisian; take advantage of the opportunity, and get rid of it. A weapon like this is of no use to you, it will only draw attention to you."

"Yes," answered the Parisian; "it is a little conspicuous, and is more suited for a gentleman than for me."

"Will you take five louis?"

"No, six—one for each chamber."

"Well, six napoleons, then?"

"My price is six louis."

"You are not a Bonapartist, then—you prefer a Louis to a Napoleon?"

The Parisian called "Redskin" smiled. "Napoleon is the best," answered he, "but Louis is worth more."

"Six napoleons."

"Six louis; there is a difference of twenty-four francs."

"Then we cannot deal."

"All right, then; I will keep the plaything."

"Keep it."

"To bargain with me like that! It shall never be said that I got rid of such a work of art for so low a price."

"Good-night, then."

"It is an era in the manufacture of pistols, which the Chesapeake Indians call Nortay-u-Hah."

"Five louis cash; why, it is a lot of money."

"Nortay-u-Hah means, in their dialect, 'short-gun; many persons are ignorant of this.'"

"Will you take five louis, and I'll throw you back a five-franc piece?"

"Master, my price is six."

The man who had kept his back to the light, and who had taken no part in this conversation, but had been all the time examining and testing the movements of the weapon, now whispered to the gunsmith, "Is the pistol a good one?"

"Excellent."

"Then I will give the six louis."

Five minutes afterwards, whilst the Parisian, nickn med "Redskin," was hiding in a secret pocket under his armpit the six louis which he had received, the gunsmith and the purchaser, the latter with the revolver in his trouser-pocket, left Coutan-chez Alley.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE CANNON OF THE RED AND BLACK BALLS.

ON the next day, which was Thursday, at the point called Décollé, a little way out of Saint Malo, where the cliff is very lofty and the sea excessively deep, a very tragical occurrence took place. A line of rocks, in the shape of the head of a lance, and joined to the land by a narrow isthmus, stretch out to sea, and end abruptly in a perpendicular descent. Nothing is commoner than this in marine architecture. To arrive at this spot you have to ascend an inclined plane—rather steep in some places. On the platform of this peak a man was standing, wrapped in a uniform cloak. It was easy to see that he carried arms, from the straight and curved lines which showed under his cloak. The summit of the rock upon which he was standing, was covered with huge blocks of stone, scattered about, and having narrow passages between. The platform, which was carpeted with a short, thick kind of grass, ended on the side next to the sea in a perpendicular precipice. Its left angle, however, was broken away, and formed one of those natural staircases so common in granite cliffs, but whose steps, out of all proportion, require sometimes the strides of a giant, and sometimes the leaps of an acrobat, to ascend or descend. It was a regular break-neck path, but at a pinch you might reach a boat, which it was easy to bring right under the cliff. A breeze was springing up. The man enveloped in his cloak, and standing firmly on his feet, with his left hand grasping his right elbow, closed one eye, and applied the other to a telescope which he held in his right hand. He seemed absorbed in watching something. He moved to the edge of the precipice, and stood there motionless, his eyes fixed on the distant horizon. It was high tide, and the waves broke gently against the foot of the cliff on which he stood.

The object which was attracting this man's attention was a ship in the offing, which was being handled in a very peculiar manner. He had not got clear of Saint Malo more than an hour when she had brought-to behind the Banquetiers. She was a large vessel, and had not anchored, but simply contented herself with laying-to.

It was still broad daylight on the cliffs, but the sea below was growing dark.

The watcher—who was a coastguardsman, as could be per-



ceived from his uniform cloak—was carefully studying all the movements of the ship, and appeared to take a mental note of them. She was lying to a little off the wind, with her topsails aback. Her captain had spread his mizen, so as to make as little way as possible in either direction. He evidently had no desire to expose his vessel to the wind, for he had brailed up the small mizen-topsail, so that he did not drift more than half a league in the hour.

The coastguardsman, still carefully engaged in performing his duty, took no heed to scrutinize the rocks beside him and below him. He had turned his back to the irregular kind of staircase, from which access could be gained to the sea from the cliff. He did not, therefore, remark any living object in that direction, nor that behind a large rock a man was hidden, who, to all appearances, had been there before the arrival of the coastguardsman. From time to time a head peeped out from the shady side of the rock, watching the watcher. This head was surmounted by a broad-brimmed American hat—very similar to that worn by the Quaker who, some ten days back, was conversing with Captain Zueta on the sands of Petit Bay.

All of a sudden the attention of the man seemed to be aroused. He hurriedly wiped the glass of his telescope with the cuff of his coat, and pointed it again in the direction of the ship.

A small black spot appeared to detach itself from her side.

This spot, which seemed no bigger than an ant, was a boat.

The boat was evidently bound for the shore. Some sailors got into it, and pulled vigorously.

She pulled in the direction of Décollé Point.

The interest of the coastguardsman had reached its height. He did not lose a single movement of the boat and, in his anxiety, approached yet nearer to the edge of the cliff.

At that moment a tall man, in the dress of a Quaker, rose up behind him, but the coastguard did not perceive him.

The man stood still for a moment, with his arms hanging down by his side; he clenched his fists, and, with the expression of a hunter waiting for his prey, and watched the back of the coastguardsman. Four paces only separated the two men from each other. He took one step in advance, then stopped, then he took a second, and again halted. He made no movement, except in walking; the rest of his body was entirely motionless. His feet fell on the turf without a sound. He took the third step, and paused for the third time. He could have stretched out his hand and touched the coastguardsman, who still had his tele-

scope directed on the boat. The man raised his two clenched hands to the height of his shoulders, then struck out fiercely, and his fists, as if moved by machinery, struck the coastguardsmen between the shoulders.

The shock was fatal.

The unfortunate man had not the time to utter a single cry; he fell headforemost from the cliff into the sea; the soles of his boots appeared for a moment in the air, and then disappeared like a flash of lightning. He sank like a stone, and the waters closed over him.

Two or three circles formed on the dark sea, widened out, and gradually disappeared.

All that remained of him was the telescope, which had fallen from his hands upon the grass.

The Quaker bent over the edge of the precipice and watched the circles increase and vanish, paused for a few moments, and then rose to his feet, humming between his teeth—

The captain of police is dead—  
From having lost his life, 'tis said.

He bent over a second time. Nothing came up to the surface. Only, at the place where the coastguardsmen had disappeared, a dark spot slowly formed on the surface of the water, which gradually mingled with the waves. No doubt, the unhappy man had fractured his skull on some rock hidden beneath the water, and it was his blood that formed the dark spot on the foam of the wave.

The Quaker, whilst considering the meaning of this red spot, began to sing once more :

A little time before his death,  
This luckless fellow still drew breath——

But he was not allowed to finish his song, for he heard behind him a quiet voice, which said :

“Ah, Rantaine! is that you? Good-day. Why, you have just killed a man!”

He turned sharply round, and saw, about fifteen paces off, a short man standing in one of the passages of the rocks, and holding a revolver in his hand.

He answered, “Ah! you saw it, did you? How do you do, *Sieur Clubin*?”

The little man gave a start.

“You know me, then?”

"You knew me fast enough," replied Rantaine.

Meanwhile, the splash of oars was heard on the waters. It was the boat, which the coastguardsman had been watching, approaching the shore.

Sieur Clubin said, in a half-whisper, as though conversing with himself:

"It was all over very quickly."

"In what way can I be of service to you?" asked Rantaine.

"A mere trifle. Why, it must be ten years since I have seen you? How have you been getting on? I hope you have prospered."

"Pretty well," answered Rantaine; "and you?"

"Very fairly indeed," responded Clubin.

Rantaine made a step in the direction of Clubin, and then stopped short, as a sharp click struck upon his ear. It was Clubin, cocking his revolver.

"Rantaine, we are about fifteen paces from each other; it is a convenient distance. Remain where you are, please."

"As you like," answered Rantaine. "What do you want with me?"

"Why, to have a talk with you, of course."

Rantaine made no further effort to move, and Sieur Clubin continued:

"You have just murdered a coastguardsman."

Rantaine raised his hat, and replied, "You have done me the honour to mention that before."

"So I did, but not so precisely. Then I said a man; now I particularise, and say a coastguardsman. His number was 619; he was a married man, and leaves a wife and five children."

"That may be true," said Rantaine.

There was a short pause.

"These coastguards are picked men," continued Clubin—"most of them old sailors."

"I have remarked," observed Rantaine, "that that class of people always leave a wife and five children."

Sieur Clubin resumed the conversation.

"Guess how much I paid for this revolver?"

"It is a handy weapon," answered Rantaine.

"What price do you say?"

"Rather a large one, I expect."

"It cost me one hundred and forty-four francs."

"Then you bought it," observed Rantaine, "at the shop in the Jacressards?"

Clubin resumed. "He had not time to utter a cry; the fall choked his voice."

"Sieur Clubin, there will be a breeze this evening."

"I am the only one who witnessed it."

"Do you still put up at the Auberge Jean?"

"Yes; it is a comfortable house."

"I remember getting some excellent sour-cROUT there."

"You must be very powerful, Rantaine. What shoulders you have! I should be sorry to get a blow from you. When I was born, I seemed so delicate that they never thought they would be able to bring me up."

"Happily, however, they succeeded."

"Yes; I still stay at the old Auberge Jean."

"Do you know, Sieur Clubin, how I recognised you? It was because you recognised me. I said to myself there is no one like Clubin for that kind of work;" and as he spoke he made a step forward.

"Keep your place, Rantaine."

Rantaine obeyed, remarking to himself, "Before a thing like that a man becomes as helpless as a child."

Sieur Clubin continued. Now, this is the situation: We have on our right, in the direction of Saint Enogat, at about three hundred paces from here, another coastguard, No. 618, who is still alive, and, on our left, towards Saint Lunaire, a coastguard-station; so that seven armed men could be here in five minutes. This rock could be surrounded—the passage of escape barred. It would be impossible to get away, and at the foot of the precipice lies a corpse."

Rantaine cast a sidelong glance at the revolver. "As you remarked, Rantaine, it is a handy weapon. Perhaps it is only loaded with blank cartridges: but what does that matter. One shot would bring a body of armed men here, and I can fire six times."

The regular sound of oars became plainer and plainer; the boat was not far off now.

The big man looked at the little man enquiringly.

Sieur Clubin continued, in the same soft and gentle voice, "Rantaine, the men in the boat that is fast approaching, if they knew what you have done, would assist in capturing you. You pay for your passage ten thousand francs to Captain Zuela. I may remark, parenthetically, that you would have made a better bargain with the smugglers of Plainmont; but they would only have taken you to England, and it would hardly have done for

you to risk going to Guernsey, where so many people have the honour of your acquaintance. Well, I return to our position. If I discharge this pistol, your arrest follows. You are to pay Zuela ten thousand francs for your passage, and you have given him five thousand in advance. Zuela, in the case of your arrest, would keep the five thousand, and make all sail. Rantaine, your disguise was very good; that hat, and that funny coat, and those gaiters, make a most decided change; but you forget your spectacles, though you did right to let your whiskers grow."

Rantaine tried to force a smile, as Clubin continued, "Rantaine, you have on a pair of American trousers, with double fobs: in one of them there is your watch; you can keep that."

"Thank you, Sieur Clubin."

"In the other, however, there is a little box made of wrought-iron, which opens and shuts with a spring; it is an old-fashioned sailor's tobacco box. Take it out of your pocket, and throw it over to me."

"But this is simple robbery."

"You are at liberty to call for help."

"Look here, Mess. Clubin—" said Rantaine, taking a step forward, and extending his open hand.

Mess. was a delicate piece of flattery.

"Keep your ground, Rantaine!"

"Mess. Clubin, let us come to an arrangement. I offer you one-half."

Clubin crossed his arms, letting the barrel of his revolver peep out.

"What do you take me for, Rantaine? I am an honest man." Then after a moment's pause, he added, "I must have all."

Rantaine muttered between his teeth, "This fellow is cast in a hard mould."

Suddenly a gleam flashed from Clubin's eyes, and his voice became clear and cutting as a steel weapon; while he said, "I see that you are in error. Robbery is your name, mine is restitution. Listen to me, Rantaine: it is ten years since you one night quitted Guernsey, taking with you the contents of a cash-box belonging to a certain firm, containing fifty thousand francs, which belonged to you, but omitting to leave behind another fifty thousand, which were the property of your partner. These fifty thousand francs stolen by you from your partner—the excellent and worthy Mess. Lethierry—at present form, with compound interest for ten years, eighty thousand six hundred and sixty-six francs, sixty-six centimes. Yesterday you went into a money-

changer's office—I can tell you his name, Rébuehet, in the Rue Saint Vincent—you handed to him seventy-six thousand francs in French notes, in exchange for which he gave you three Bank of England notes for one thousand pounds sterling each, in addition to the exchange. These bank-notes you put in the iron tobacco-box, and the tobacco-box you put in the right-hand pocket of your trousers. These three thousand pounds sterling amount to seventy-five thousand francs, and this I agree to accept in Mess. Lethierry's name. To-morrow I leave for Guernsey, and will hand over the money to him. Rantaine, the ship lying-to out yonder is the *Tamaulipus*; you had your baggage sent on board last night with the baggage of the crew. You are desirous of leaving France, and have strong reasons for doing so. You are going to Arequipa. The boat is on its way to take you off to the vessel. You are waiting for it here. It is close at hand; you can hear the sound of its oars. It depends upon me to let you go or to keep you here. Not another word; throw me the iron tobacco-box."

Rantaine put his hand in his pocket, drew out the box, and threw it at Clubin, to whose feet it rolled.

Clubin bent to pick it up, never taking his eyes off Rantaine, raised the tobacco-box from the ground with his left hand, kept the barrel of his revolver pointed full at Rantaine with his right. Then he cried out, "Turn your back, my friend." Rantaine did as he was ordered.

Sieur Clubin tucked the pistol under his arm, and touched the spring of the box; it flew open. There were four bank-notes in it, three for one thousand pounds each, and one for ten pounds. He refolded the three one thousand pound notes, put them back in the box, closed the lid, and placed it in his pocket.

Then he picked up a pebble, and, wrapping it in the note for ten pounds, said:

"You can turn round again."

Rantaine did so, and Sieur Clubin continued: "I told you that I should be satisfied with three thousand pounds; I therefore return you this note for ten pounds," and as he spoke he threw Rantaine the note wrapped round the stone.

Rantaine gave it a kick, and stone and note fell into the sea.

"Just as you like," said Clubin. "You must be well off. My mind is easy."

The plash of oars, which had continued during the whole of this conversation, now ceased, showing that the boat had arrived at the foot of the cliff.

"Your carriage is ready; you can go Rantaine."

Rantaine moved towards the staircase and began to descend.

With every precaution, Clubin moved to the edge of the precipice, and, bending over, watched him go down.

The boat was waiting off the last step, almost in the very place where the body of the coastguard had sunk. Whilst he watched Rantaine stumbling from rock to rock, Clubin muttered between his teeth, "Good! Number 619 thought that he was alone. Rantaine thought there were only two there; I only knew that we were three." He perceived on the grass at his feet the telescope that the dead man had let fall. He picked it up.

The measured sound of oars began again; Rantaine had jumped into the boat, which had put off. When Rantaine was safely in the boat, and the cliff began to recede from him, he started to his feet, and, with a face distorted with rage, shook his fist in the direction of the land, crying, "Ha! the Devil is a mere nothing to him!"

Some seconds afterwards, Clubin, from his position in the summit of the cliff, still keeping the telescope pointed on the boat, distinctly heard these words, shouted in loud tones, that rose high above the murmurs of the sea:

"Sieur Clubin, you are an honest man, but you must not be angry if I send a letter to Lethierry acquainting him with this narrative; and in this very boat is a sailor, a Guernsey man, belonging to the crew of the *Tamaulipas*, who will be at Saint Malo next time. Zueta returns there, who will bear witness that I placed in your hands the sum of three thousand pounds sterling for Mess. Lethierry."

It was Rantaine's voice that spoke.

Clubin was a man who took things well. Motionless as the coastguardsman had been, and almost in the same place, he stood with his eye to the glass, never allowing the boat to escape his sight for an instant. He saw it grow less and less amongst the waves; watched it appear and disappear; run alongside of the vessel that was lying-to, and hail it, and presently he saw the tall form of Rantaine on the deck of the *Tamaulipas*.

When the boat was hauled on board and secured on the davits, the *Tamaulipas* set sail. The wind blew from the land, and soon filled her sails. Clubin still kept his glass pointed towards her, as her outline grew fainter and yet more faint, and in the course of half-an-hour the *Tamaulipas* had become but a dark spot, growing every moment less and less against the pale evening sky.

## CHAPTER IX.

## USEFUL TO THOSE WHO EXPECT FOREIGN LETTERS.

On that evening, for the second time, Sieur Clubin returned home late.

One of the causes of his delay was that, before returning, he had gone to the Dinan Gate, where there are many spirit shops, and had purchased in one of them, where he was not known, a bottle of brandy, which he stowed away in one of his large pockets; then, as the Durande was to sail next morning, he took a turn over her to see that everything was in readiness.

When Sieur Clubin returned to the Auberge Jean, there was no one left in the lower room except the old sea-captain, Gertrais Gaboureau, who was sitting over his pipe and glass of ale. He nodded to Clubin in the intervals of a sip and a whiff.

"Good evening, Captain Gertrais."

"Well, the *Tamaulipas* is off at last."

"Is she?" replied Clubin; "I paid no attention to her."

Captain Gertrais Gaboureau used his spittoon, and said, "Zuela is off."

"When did he go?"

"This evening."

"Where has he gone to?"

"To the devil!"

"No doubt, but by which route?"

"By Arequipa."

"I know nothing about it," returned Clubin; then he added, "I am going to turn in."

He lifted his candle, took a few steps towards the door, and then returned.

"Have you ever been to Arequipa, Captain Gertrais?"

"Yes, some years back."

"Where do they touch at on the outward voyage?"

"A little everywhere; but the *Tamaulipas* will not touch anywhere."

Mons. Gertrais Gaboureau emptied the ashes out of his pipe into the corner of a plate, and continued:

"You know the sloop called the *Trojan Horse*, and that fine vessel, the *Trentemaisons*, which sailed for Cardiff? I advised them not to put out, on account of the weather. Well, they have come back in a fine state; the sloop had a cargo of turpen-



tine; she sprang a leak, and when using the pumps they pumped up the cargo with the water. As for the ship, it is her upper works that has suffered most; her cut-water, her head-rail, and the stock of her port anchor are broken; her standing jib-boom has snapped short off at the cap. As for the shrouds and bob-stays, just have a look at them yourself. The mizen mast is not outwardly injured, but I expect that it is badly strained. The iron on the bowsprit is loosened, and it is a curious fact that, though the bowsprit itself is not broken, dolphin striker and all is entirely carried away; the port bow is stove in, and this all comes from not taking advice."

Clubin had placed his candle on the table, and was engaged in arranging some pins which he kept in the collar of his overcoat, when he suddenly said:

"Did you not say, Captain, that the *Tamaulipas* would not touch anywhere?"

"Yes, she goes straight to Chili."

"In that case we can hear nothing of her until she reaches her destination?"

"I beg your pardon, Captain Clubin. In the first place, she can send letters by any vessels she may meet who are on their way to Europe."

"True—quite true."

"Then there is the Sea Post-office."

"What do you mean by the Sea Post-office?"

"Do you not know what that is?"

"No."

"When you pass the Straits of Magellan."

"Well?"

"Snow everywhere, always heavy weather, contrary winds, and chopping seas."

"Well, go on."

"When you have doubled Cape Monmouth."

"Yes, go on."

"Then you double Cape Valentine."

"And then?"

"Why, then you double Cape Isidore."

"And after that?"

"You double Point Anne."

"Good! but what is it that you call the Sea Post-office?"

"We are coming to that. Mountains to the right, mountains to the left; penguins and stormy petrels all about you. An awful place. Ah! thousand saints, and thousand monkeys, what

a hammering one gets there! The storm we get there wants no one to help it. There, one has to cling to the belaying-pins, and to shorten sail. That's where you have to take in the mainsail and set the storm jib. A series of capfuls of wind and then, perhaps, five or six days of scudding under bare poles. Every rag of canvas blown clean out of the bolt ropes. What a dance it is! Squalls, heavy enough to make a three-master hop like a flea. I once passed an English brig, the *True Blue*, and saw her jib-boom, with a cabin boy that was hanging on to it by his eye-lids, knocked into everlasting smash. The crew were whirled up into the air like butterflies. I once saw the second mate of the *Revenue*—a pretty schooner—knocked off the fore-crosstrees and killed on the spot. I have often had all my sails blown to ribbons. Fifty-gun frigates leak as though they were wicker baskets; and then the infernal coast—nothing is more dangerous—jagged rocks, and reefs of all kinds. At last you get to Port Famine. Then things grow worse and worse. The biggest waves that I ever saw in my life; the devil's own latitudes. All at once you see, in big red letters, "Post-office."

"What do you mean, Captain Gertrai?"

"What I mean, Captain Clubin, is that, immediately after doubling Point Anne, you see on a rock, more than a hundred feet high, a big post, with a barrel hung from it. This barrel is the letter-box. The English, of course, have the impudence to write up 'Post-office.' What have they got to do with it? It belongs to the ocean—it doesn't belong to that worthy gentleman, the King of England, but is common to all the world. It belongs to every flag. 'Post-office,' indeed! Why, it sounds like Chinese. It makes me feel as if the Devil had offered me a cup of tea. But now I will tell you how they arrange matters: Every vessel which passes sends a boat with letters to the rock. A vessel which comes from the Atlantic, for instance, deposits its letters for Europe there, whilst a vessel from the Pacific its letters for New Zealand or California. The officer in charge of the boat puts in his lot, and takes away any others that he may find there. You take charge of these letters, and the next ship that follows you takes yours. As ships are always sailing in contrary directions, the port which I am leaving may be the one to which you are going. I carry your letters, you carry mine. The barrel is securely chained to the post. And it rains, blows, snows and hails there—a nice bit of sea. The Devil's imps fly about there pretty freely. The *Tamaulipas* will pass by there. The barrel has a good lid, with hinges, but no padlock. You see, a

man can communicate with home easily enough, and that letters reach here in perfect safety."

"It is very curious," murmured Clubin, thoughtfully. Captain Gertrais Gaboureau took a fresh draught of ale. "Let us suppose that that thief of a Zuela should write to me. If he shoves his scrawl into the barrel in the Straits of Magellan, in about four months I should get the villain's scribble. . . . Well, Captain Clubin, do you start to-morrow?"

Clubin, absorbed in dreams, did not at once reply, and Captain Gertrais repeated the question.

Clubin woke up. "Certainly, Captain Gertrais, it is my day. I am off to-morrow morning."

"If I was you, Captain Clubin, I should do nothing of the kind. The hair on dogs' coats felt damp for the last two nights; the sea birds have been flying around the lighthouse lantern—a thoroughly bad sign. I have a storm glass, too, which gives good advice now and then. The moon is in her second quarter, and the bulb of the thermometer is damp. I noticed some pimpernels, with their leaves shut, and a field of clover with the stalks quite stiff. The worms are coming out of the ground to day, the flies bite, the bees will not leave the vicinity of their hives, the sparrows are chirping one to the other. You can hear the sound of bells a long way off. I heard the bells of Saint Lunaire ring the angelus, and the sunset was thoroughly bad. There will be a heavy fog to-morrow, and I advise you to keep in port. I dread fog much more than storm and tempest—fog is always an ugly customer."

## BOOK VI.

*A SOBER SKIPPER AND A DRUNKARD AT  
THE HELM.*

## CHAPTER I.

## THE DOUVRES ROCKS.

ABOUT five leagues from Guernsey, opposite to Plainmont, and between the islands of La Manche and Saint Malo, are a group of rocks in the open sea, called the Douvres Rocks. It is a most dangerous spot. Douvres is a name that has been given to many rocks and cliffs. There is a well-known one near Côtes du Nord, in which a lighthouse is in course of erection, and which is a very dangerous reef, but this must not be confounded with the rock that we are speaking of. The point of France nearest to the Rocks of Douvres is Cape Bréhaut. The Douvres are more distant from the coast of France than from the nearest of the islands of the Norman Archipelago. The distance of this reef from Jersey may be measured by taking the length of the island. If Jersey could be made to turn upon Corbière, as upon a pivot, Saint Catherine's Point would almost touch the Douvres. This would make the rocks a distance of about four leagues. In frequented seas, the most dangerous rocks are seldom entirely deserted.

Smugglers are met with at Hagot, coastguardsmen at Binic, Celts at Bréhat, oyster-farmers at Cancale, crab-catchers at Brecqhou, rabbit-shooters at Césambre, the Island of César; trawlers at the Minquiers, and dredgers at Ecréhon. But the rocks of Douvres are never inhabited; they are the homes of the birds of the sea; no rocks are more feared by sailors. The Casquets, where they say the *Blanche Nef* was lost; the banks of Calvados, the Needles of the Isle of Wight, the Ronesse, which makes the coast of Beaulieu so dangerous; the sub-marine reefs of Préal, which render the entrance to Merquel so difficult, and which necessitate the huge red buoy in twenty fathoms of water; the treacherous channels leading to Etalles and to

Plouha; the two Druids, in the south of Guernsey; the Great and Little Anderlo, the Corbière, the Hanois, the Isle of Ras—a terror to mariners, concerning which is said,

“Si jamais tu passes le Ras;  
Si tu ne meurs, tu trembleras”—

the Mortes Femmes; the Déroute, between Jersey and Guernsey; the Hardent, between the Menquiers, and Chousey; the Mauvais Cheval, between Boulay Bay and Barneville, have all a much less fatal reputation. It is better to run the gauntlet of these rocks, one after the other, than to once take your chance of escaping from the Rocks of Douvres. In all the dangerous Channel sea, which is the *Ægean* of the west, the Rocks of Douvres have but one rival, the Paternoster Rock, between Guernsey and Sark. From the Paternoster, however, signals of distress can be made, and a vessel driven on to it may, perhaps, receive assistance. From it can be seen Point Dicaud, or Point Iocare, and Gros Nez, on the southern side; but from the Douvres you can see nothing. Storm, clouds, the angry sea, solitude and desolation, all have their home there. The granite walls are smooth and perpendicular—precipices on all sides. The terrible inhospitality of the abyss—they are situated in the open sea, and the water is very deep. An isolated rock, like the Douvres, attracts strange creatures, who avoid the haunts of men. It is a vast sub-marine cave, with a thousand channels and cells—a labyrinth under the waters of the ocean. There, at a depth to which no diver could descend, are caverns and grottoes, dark haunts and winding passages—the gloomy abodes where the monsters of the ocean live and devour each other. It is a perfect chain of destruction; the crabs devour the fishes, and are in their turn devoured. Things of frightful shape—not created to be seen by human eyes—move swiftly through its gloomy depths. Occasional glimpses of jaws, mouths studded with teeth, antennæ, claws, scales, and fins, can be caught sight of floating about, growing larger and smaller, decomposing and disappearing in the ill-omened darkness. Terrible creatures swim about seeking their prey. It is a nest of monsters.

The ideal of the horrible exists there.

Picture to yourself a spot swarming with all that is most terrible and repulsive!

To gaze down into the depths of ocean is, in imagination, to peer into the Unknown, and to look upon its most terrible side. Its depths are like the Realm of Night. There is the sleep and

unconsciousness—apparently so, at least—of creation. There, in the most perfect security, are committed crimes for which no one is held responsible. There, in awful repose, the first rude sketches of life, demonical and spectral, pursue their dread occupations in the gloom of night.

Forty years ago, two rocks of strange appearance pointed out the position of the Douvres to ocean wayfarers. They were tall and precipitous, pointed and curved, and their summits almost touched one another. They looked like the tusks of some drowned elephant issuing from the sea. Only they were tusks as high as towers, belonging to an elephant as big as a mountain. These two natural towers, rising high above this home of sea-monsters, had a narrow passage between them, through which the waves passed with terrible violence. It was a winding passage, full of turns and angles, and looked like a street between two high walls.

There used to be a Great Douvre and a Little Douvre—one was forty feet high, and the other sixty—but the constant wash of the sea ended by undermining one of them, and the equinoctial gales of October the 26th, 1859, threw it down. The smaller one remains, but it is much worn, and cannot stand very long.

One of the most remarkable points of the Douvres is called the "Man-Rock," and is there to this day. At the close of the last century, some fishermen visiting the place found on one of the higher rocks a human body. By its side was a quantity of empty shells. Some poor wretch had been shipwrecked on this desolate rock, and had sustained life upon shell-fish, until death had overtaken him. Hence the name of the "Man-Rock." The solitudes of ocean are melancholy. There is tumult and silence in them. Humanity has but little to do with what passes there. We cannot tell the use of what goes on in those places. The Douvres is one of these solitudes; as far as the eye can reach is one wide sweep of seething, foaming sea.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE UNLOOKED-FOR BOTTLE.

ON Friday morning, the day after the sailing of the *Tamanlipas*, the *Durande* started for Guernsey.

She left Saint Malo at nine o'clock.

It was a lovely morning—not a sign of fog. Old Captain Gertrais must have been in his dotage to have talked of such a thing.

The unusual occupations of *Sieur Clubin* had certainly made him miss a good deal of freight, for he had only on board some packages of fancy goods from Paris, for the shops at Saint Pierre Port; three boxes for the Guernsey Hospital—one box containing yellow soap, another rushlights, and the third French and Cordovan leather for shoes. He brought back from his last trip a case of crushed sugar and three chests of tea, which the Custom House authorities would not permit him to land. He had very few cattle on board—a few bullocks only, and these were carelessly fastened up in the hold. There were six passengers on board—a Guernseyman, two cattle merchants from Saint Malo, “a tourist” (a phrase which had already begun to be used), a denizen of Paris, most likely on a commercial mission, and an American missionary, who was travelling to distribute Bibles. The *Durande* had a crew of seven men (not including *Clubin*), a helmsman, a stoker, a carpenter, a cook (who could lend a hand as a seaman in an emergency), two engineers, and a cabin-boy. One of the two engineers was also a good working mechanic; he was a Dutch negro, who had escaped from one of the sugar-factories at Surinam, and was called *Imbrancam*. *Imbrancam* understood the engine thoroughly, and worked it admirably. In those days, when the steamer first began to run, his black face, appearing from the engine-room, enhanced the diabolical reputation of the *Durande*.

The helmsman was, by birth, a Jerseyman, but of a Cotentin family, and was named *Tangrouille*, which was originally the name of a family of high distinction.

This is a perfect fact. In the Channel Islands, as in England and all other aristocratic countries, there is a great division of classes, as in India and Germany. Nobility is won by the sword and lost by toil, and is only preserved by entirely refraining from useful labour of any kind. To have no occupation is to live honourably. He who works is not thought much of. Business is fatal to rank and position. In former times, in France, there was but one exception to this rule—the trade of glass manufacturers. French gentlemen took a pride in emptying bottles, and considered it not derogatory to make them. In the Channel Islands, as well as in Great Britain, he who wishes to remain noble must remain rich. An artisan cannot be a gentleman. If he ever has been one he loses all his privileges. A sailor may

be descended from knights or baronets, but he is none the less a simple sailor. Thirty years ago there was in Aurigny a lineal descendant of the Gorges, who might have laid claim to the rights of the manor of Gorges, confiscated by Philip Augustus. This man used to crawl along the beach with bare feet, picking up seaweed. A De Carteret is a waggoner in Sark. There is a draper in Jersey, and a shoemaker in Guernsey, called Gruchy, who say that their real names are Grouchy, and that they are cousins of the Marshal of Waterloo. The old chronicles of the Bishopric of Coutance make mention of a lordship of Tangroville, evidently derived from Tancarville in the Lower Seine, which is, in point of fact, Montmorency. In the fifteenth century, archer and *étouffe*, of the Lord of Tangroville, bore behind him his "corset et ses autre harnois." In May, 1371, at Pontorson, at the assembly convoked by Bertrand du Guesclin, Mons. de Tangroville was present as a Knight Bachelor. In Normandy, if poverty overtakes a man, he is soon removed from the ranks of the nobility. A change in the pronunciation is sufficient—Tangroville becomes Tangrouille, and all is over.

This is what had happened to the helmsman of the *Durande*.

At Saint Pierre Port, in the *Bordage*, there is a dealer in old iron, called Ingrouille, who is most likely, in reality, an Ingroville. Under Louis the Fat, the Ingroilles held three manors in the district of Valognes. A certain Abbé Trigan wrote a work, entitled "The Ecclesiastical History of Normandy." This Trigan was the parish priest of the Manor of Digoville. The Lord of Digoville, had he fallen from his high estate, would have called himself Digouille. Tangrouille, probably Tancarville, and possibly Montmorency had a very gentlemanly failing, but which, however, was against his getting on in his profession—he was a drunkard.

Sieur Clubin obstinately persisted on retaining his services on the ship's books, and had passed his word for him with Mess. Lethierry. Tangrouille never left the boat, and slept on board of her. On the day before the departure of the *Durande*, when Sieur Clubin came on board at a late hour in the night, Tangrouille was in his hammock fast asleep. During the night Tangrouille woke up, according to his nocturnal custom. Every drunkard, who is not entirely his own master, has some secret place in which to hide his drink. This place Tangrouille called his "store-room." This secret receptacle was in the hold. He had located it there as the most unlikely place to be found out that he could think of, and imagined that he alone knew of its



existence. Captain Olubin was a sober man, and excessively strict, and the small amount of rum and gin that the helmsman could conceal from the watchful gaze of his superior he secreted in this mysterious corner of the hold behind a coil of sounding-line, and almost every night he went to visit his treasure. The watch that was kept upon him was a strict one, and the debauch was not much to boast of, and, as a rule, Tangrouille's nocturnal orgies were confined to one or two timid mouthfuls, taken in fear and trembling. But on this occasion, to his extreme surprise, he found a bottle of brandy in his store-room. His joy was intense, and was only equalled by his astonishment. What good angel had sent him this bottle? He could not recollect how or when he had brought it on board. He drank it up at once. Partly from prudence, and partly from fear of its being discovered and confiscated, he threw the bottle into the sea. Next morning, when he went to the helm, he was a little unsteady on his feet. His steering did not, however, vary much from his usual performance.

As to Olubin, he had, as we know, returned to the Auberge Jean, and gone to bed there.

Olubin carried always, under his shirt, a leather travelling-belt, which he only took off at night, and in which he had in reserve, in case of need, some twenty guineas. On the inside of this belt was written his name, "*Sieur Olubin*," on the raw leather, in thick lithographic ink, which cannot be washed out. Next morning, when he got up, before leaving his room, he put into his belt the box containing the seventy-five thousand francs in bank-notes, and then, as usual, buckled it round him.

### CHAPTER III.

#### INTERRUPTED CONVERSATION.

THE DURANDE made an excellent start. The passengers, as soon as they had stowed away their bags and portmanteaus, began to criticise the vessel in the manner which has now become habitual to travellers. Two of them, the tourist and the Parisian, had never seen a steamer before, and the first turn of the paddles made them wonder and admire the foam. Then they looked at the smoke, and then they examined, in rotation, and bit by bit, every portion of the vessel—the upper and lower decks, and all

the marine fixtures, such as ring-bolts, grappels, hooks, and bolts, which, by reason of their precision and adjustment, form a sort of gigantic jewellery—a species of iron trinkets, gilded by the rust of the weather. They examined the little signal-gun fastened on the upper deck. “Chained up like a watch-dog,” remarked the tourist.

“And with a waterproof on, to prevent its catching cold,” returned the Parisian; and, changing the subject, they made the usual remarks on the view of Saint Malo. One passenger argued that the approach to a place by sea was always deceptive, and that, at a league’s distance, Ostend was as like Dunkirk as two peas. He concluded his observations on Dunkirk by the remark that the two light-ships, which were painted red, were called the *Ruytingen* and the *Mardyck*.

As they steamed on, Saint Malo grew smaller and smaller, and finally disappeared from view. The sea was perfectly smooth. The long line, fringed with foam, which formed in the wake of the vessel, was lost in the far distance. Guernsey is in the midst of a straight line, drawn from Saint Malo in France to Exeter in England. But the most direct line is not always the one that can be taken at sea, though steamers have an advantage on this point over sailing-ships. The sea, in conjunction with the wind, forms an allied force. A ship is a combination of man’s skill. Elemental force is a machine of boundless force, whilst art has its bounds. Navigation is a struggle between these two forces—the one possesses unlimited resources, and the other is bounded by man’s inventive genius.

Intellect brought to bear upon machinery counterbalances the power of the elements. The infinite has a machinery of its own. The elements know what they are doing and where they are going to. Force is never blind. Human intellect has to keep watch upon force, and to study its natural laws. Whilst any portion of these laws are buried in obscurity the struggle continues, and steam navigation forms a series of victories which human skill has gained over the brute strength of the ocean. The chief feature in steam is that it disciplines the ship itself; it gives her power against the wind, and renders her obedient to the guidance of man.

Never had the *Durande* a prospect of making a better passage. She was doing wonderfully well.

By eleven o’clock, with a fresh breeze blowing from the nor-nor-west, the *Durande* was off the Minquiers, moving under half-steam, hugging the wind, and steering due west on

the starboard tack. The day was clear and fine; but the fishing-boats, in spite of this, were making for the shore.

As if every one was anxious to get into port, the sea by degrees became clear of vessels. It must be allowed that the *Durande* was a little out of her usual course, but the crew paid no attention to such matters, for their trust in the captain was unlimited; but, at the same time, there was a decided deviation—no doubt through an error on the part of the helmsman. The *Durande* seemed to be heading more in the direction of Jersey than Guernsey. Shortly after eleven the captain rectified the ship's course, and put her head fairly for Guernsey. There had only been a little time lost; but when the days are short you cannot afford to lose time. Although it was February, the sun shone brightly.

In the state in which Tangrouille was, he had neither a steady hand or a firm footing; the result was that he lurched about a good deal, and stopped the way of the vessel considerably.

The wind had almost entirely fallen.

The passenger from Guernsey, who had a telescope, directed it from time to time on a small grey cloud which was lightly moving before the wind on the western horizon. It resembled a piece of wool, sprinkled with dust.

Captain Clubin wore his usual austere and Puritanical expression of countenance, and appeared to redouble his attention. All was tranquil and even merry on board the *Durande*; the passengers talked together. It is easy to judge of the state of the sea during a passage by closing your eyes and listening to the tenor of the conversation on board. Perfect freedom of conversation amongst the passengers shows that the sea is perfectly calm. It would be, for instance, impossible for a conversation like the following to take place if the sea were rough:

"Sir, do you see that pretty green and red fly?"

"It has wandered out to sea, and has come on board to rest."

"A fly does not get tired soon."

"No; they are so light, the wind carries them along."

"Once, sir, they weighed an ounce of flies, and then counted them, and there were six thousand two hundred and sixty-eight."

The Guernsey man with the telescope had come up to the two cattle merchants from Saint Malo, who were talking in this manner:

"A bull from Aubrac has a thick round back and a yellow side. He is rather slow, because his legs are so short."

"The Saler ones beat them in that point."

"Sir, in my life I have seen two perfect bulls. The first one had short legs, thick breast, full rump, broad haunches, a proper length from the neck to the tail, good withers, and a skin easy to take off; the other was one that would fatten well—a powerful back, strong neck and shoulders, brown and white hide, and sloping hindquarters."

"He must have come from Cotentine."

"Yes, and he had a cross of the Angus or Suffolk in him."

"I do not know if you will believe me, sir, but in the south they have donkey-shows."

"Donkey-shows!"

"Yes, upon my word, and the ugliest and most admired."

"Indeed! Why, that is the same as in the mule-shows; the prize is always given to the ugliest one."

"Just so! Why, look at a Poitevine mare—large belly and thick legs."

"The finest mule is only a barrel on four posts."

"Men and beasts differ in good looks."

"And so do women."

"That is quite true."

"I like a woman to be pretty."

"And I like her to be well dressed."

"Yes, clean and tidy—as neat as a new pin."

"Everything fresh about her. A pretty girl ought to look as if she had come out of a bandbox."

"But to come back to my bulls; I saw those two sold in the market at Thouars."

"The market of Thouars—I know it well. Do you know the Bonneaus, of Rochelle, and the Babas? They are corn merchants, and always attend the markets."

The tourist and the Parisian were talking with the American missionary.

"Sir," said the tourist, "I will tell you the floating tonnage of the civilised world. France, seven hundred and sixteen thousand tons; Germany, a million; United States, five millions; England, five millions five hundred thousand. Add to these the tonnage of the smaller countries, twelve millions nine hundred and four thousand tons, distributed amongst the one hundred and forty-five thousand vessels in different parts of the globe."

The American interrupted him. "The United States, sir, has five million five hundred thousand tons."

"I bow to your superior knowledge," said the tourist. "You are an American."

"Yes, sir."

"The more reason for your being right."

There was a slight pause, the missionary wondering if this would be the right moment to begin a distribution of Bibles.

"Sir," began the tourist; "is it true that you have a passion for nicknames in America, and that you give one to all your leading men? For instance, your famous Missouri banker, Thomas Burton, is called 'Old Ingots.'"

"Certainly, as we call Zachariah Taylor 'Old Zach,' and General Harrison, 'Old Tip,' and General Jackson, 'Old Hickory?'"

"'Tis because Jackson is as hard as hickory wood, and Harrison beat the redskins at Tippecanoe."

"It is a strange fashion."

"It is our custom. We call Van-Buren 'The Little Wizard;' Seward, who introduced small notes, 'Little Billy;' Douglas, the democratic senator of Illinois, who is four feet high, and speaks magnificently, 'The Little Giant.' You may go from Texas to Maine without hearing Mr. Cass's name—he is always spoken of as 'The Great Michiganer;' nor yet Clay's name, for they always call him 'The Miller's Boy, with the Scar.' Clay is a miller's son.

"Well," said the Parisian, "for my part, I should prefer to say Clay or Cass—they are so much shorter."

"You would not be in fashion. Corwin, the Secretary to the Treasury, is called 'The Waggoner's Boy;' Daniel Webster, 'Black Dan;' Winfield Scott, who, directly after he had beaten the English at Chippehay, wanted his dinner, was called 'Quick! a Plate of Soup.'"

The little white cloud that had been hovering in the horizon had now increased in size. It formed an angle of fifteen degrees. It hung low upon the water, as if there was not sufficient breeze to lift it up. There was hardly a breath of wind. The sea was as smooth as glass. Although it was not yet noon, the sun was growing very pale. It gave light, but not warmth.

"I think," remarked the tourist, "that the weather is going to change."

"We shall have rain," said the Parisian.

"Or fog," suggested the American.

"In Italy," said the tourist, "the lightest rainfall is at Molletta, and the heaviest at Tolmezzo."

At twelve o'clock, according to the custom in the Archipelago,

the dinner-bell rang. Those who wished to dine went below and did so. Others, who had brought some provisions in their bags, sat upon deck and ate them. All went merrily. Clubin ate nothing.

Whilst they were eating the conversation went on.

The Guernseyman, having probably a liking for Bibles, approached the American, when the latter asked :

"Do you know these seas?"

"Yes, I belong to these parts."

"And so do I," broke in one of the Saint Malo men.

The Guernseyman bowed, and continued. "At present we are right in the open sea, but I should not like to have been overtaken by a fog when we were off the Minquiers."

The American remarked to the man from Saint Malo: "Islanders are more used to the sea than those who dwell inland or on the coast."

"True, we coast folks are only half dipped in the briny."

"What are the Minquiers?" asked the American.

"Very dangerous rocks," answered the Saint Malo man.

"There are also the Grelets," said the Guernseyman.

"So there are," said the other.

"And the Chouas."

The man from Saint Malo smiled. "For the matter of that there are the Savages also."

"And the Monks," said the Guernseyman.

"And the Duck," retorted his opponent.

"Sir," remarked the Guernseyman, politely, "you have a reply for everything."

The tourist interrupted with a question: "Have we to pass through all these regions of rocks?"

"No, we have left them behind us—they lie sou'-sou'-west."

"The Guernseyman continued: "Counting them altogether the Grelets have fifty-seven peaks."

"And the Minquiers forty-eight," replied the other.

Here the conversation was carried on between the man from Saint Malo and the Guernseyman. "It seems to me, Mr. Saint Malo, that you have not included three rocks."

"I thought that I had mentioned all."

"From the Dérée to Maître-Ile?"

"Yes."

"And the Maisons?"

"Yes, I know them—seven rocks in the midst of the Minquiers."

"Ah! you know every stone, I see."

"If I did not know them I should not be fit to live at Saint Malo."

"How pleasantly you French gentlemen argue!"

It was now the Saint Malo's man's turn to bow.

"The Savages are three rocks."

"Yes; and the Monks, two."

"The Duck, one."

"The Duck, one only."

"No, for the Suarde is four rocks."

"What do you call the Suarde?" asked the Guernseyman.

"What you call the Chouas."

"It is not nice to pass between the Chouas and the Duck."

"It is only possible for a bird to do so."

"How about the fish?"

"Not so easy for them in rough weather; they would drive themselves against the walls."

"There are sandbanks at the Minquiers."

"Yes; and round the Maisons."

"We can see eight rocks from Jersey"

"Yes; from the beech at Azette, but not eight, only seven."

"When the tide is out you can walk all over the Minquiers."

"Doubtless, the sands would be uncovered."

"And the Dirouilles?"

"The Dirouilles are not like the Minquiers."

"No; I only mean that they, too, are dangerous."

"They are not far from Granville."

"I see that you Saint Malo people have, like us, a passion for sailing in these seas."

"Yes," replied the man from Saint Malo—"with this difference. We say, 'we are accustomed;' you say, 'we are fond of it.'"

"You make good sailors."

"I am a cattle merchant."

"Who was that well-known naval officer born at Saint Malo?"

"Surcouf."

"There was another."

"Yes; Dugay Trouin."

Here the commercial gentleman from Paris joined the conversation. "Dugay Trouin? He was taken prisoner by the English. He was as handsome as he was brave, and an English lady fell in love with him, and aided him to escape."

At this instant a voice like thunder exclaimed:

"*You are drunk!*"

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE TALENTS OF CAPTAIN CLUBIN.

EVERYBODY turned round.

It was the captain addressing the man at the helm. Sieur Clubin, from the manner in which he spoke to Tangrouille, was either very angry or wished to seem so.

An outburst of anger at a judicious moment often shifts responsibility from the shoulders of one to those of another. The captain, standing on the bridge between the two paddle boxes, looked sternly at the helmsman, and repeated between his teeth the word "*Drunkard!*"

The unfortunate Tangrouille hung his head.

The fog was coming on rapidly. It had by this time spread over nearly half the horizon. It seemed to close in on all sides at once. A fog, in some measure, resembles a drop of oil—it spreads where it falls. It moved on sternly and mutely before the faint breeze. By degrees it took possession of the sea. It was coming dead a-head from the nor'-west. It was like a vast moving cliff, and stood up like a wall across the sea. You could see the exact spot where the fog came down upon the water. The entrance to the fog was still half-a-league off. If the wind changed they might avoid it, but to do so, it must change at once. The half-league of interval was rapidly decreasing. The Durande approached the fog, and the fog came nearer to her.

Clubin ordered them to put on more steam, and to take a half turn to starboard. By this means they, for some time, skirted the edge of the fog. It, however, still made way; but the ship was, as yet, in the light of day. The time, however, that was lost in these manœuvres was hard to pick up again. Night comes so quickly in February.

The Guernseyman watched the fog; he said to the passenger from Saint Malo:

"It is coming on thicker."

"It will be a dirty night at sea," observed one of the men from Saint Malo.

"We shall not have such a good passage, after all," observed the other.

The Guernseyman approached Clubin.

"Captain Clubin," said he, "I fear that we shall be overtaken by the fog."



"I did not wish to leave Saint Malo to-day," replied Clubin, "but they advised me to do so?"

"Who did so?"

"Some old sailors."

"Well," replied the Guernseyman; "perhaps you are right in leaving. Who knows but there may be a storm to-morrow? At this time of year we may expect the worst."

A few minutes later, and the Durande steamed clean into the fog. The effect was wonderful. In an instant, those aft lost sight of those who were forward. A moist grey partition divided the vessel into two parts. Then the whole of the steamer glided into the fog. The sun grew pale, like a clear moon. Everyone shivered; the passengers put on their great coats, and the sailors their oilskins.

The sea, without a ripple on it, seemed to threaten more from its utter tranquillity. It appeared as if there was a menacing meaning hidden beneath this unusual calm. The colouring of the atmosphere was pale and wan. The dark chimney and the black smoke stood boldly out against the faint light with which the ship was surrounded. It was no use keeping to the east any longer; so the captain put her head towards Guernsey, and ordered full speed.

The Guernseyman, who was hanging about the skylight above the engines, heard the negro, Imbrancam, speaking to his comrade, the stoker. The passenger listened.

The negro said: "This morning, when we had plenty of light, we slowed down; and now that we are in the fog we have got full steam on."

The Guernsey man came back to Sieur Clubin.

"Captain Clubin," said he, "have we not too much steam on?"

"What shall I do, sir? I must pick up the time that I have lost through that drunken fellow's fault."

"That is true, Captain Clubin."

"Besides," added Clubin, "there is enough fog now; it will be much worse when night comes on, and so I am in a hurry to get into port."

The Guernsey man rejoined the passengers from Saint Malo, remarking, "We have a most judicious captain." At intervals, great waves of mist floated heavily on, and hid the sun, which, after a time, emerged from them, looking pale and sickly. The small portion of the sky that could be seen resembled those painted strips of canvas, stained and dirty, which do duty for it amongst theatrical scenery.

The Durande passed close by a cutter, which had prudently anchored. This was the *Shealtiel*, of Guernsey. Her skipper remarked the speed at which the Durande was going, and, in his opinion, she was out of her right course—she seemed inclining too much to the west. The spectacle of a steamship going at full speed in a dense fog rather surprised him. At two o'clock the weather had become so dense that the captain had to leave the bridge and take up his position alongside of the steersman. The sun had totally disappeared, and the fog was all round them. The Durande was wrapped in a white mist. They were passing through a livid atmosphere. Bot<sup>h</sup> sea and sky had become wholly invisible.

The wind had entirely died away.

The can of turpentine that hung under the bridge between the paddle-boxes never even quivered.

Silence had fallen upon the passengers.

The Parisian every now and then hummed just above his breath one of Béranger's songs, "*Un jour le bon Dieu s'éveillant.*" One of the men from Saint Malo interrupted him.

"You are from Paris, sir?"

"I am, sir. *Il mis la tête à la fenêtre.*"

"What is doing in Paris just now?"

"*Leur planète a pari peut-être.* Everything is going wrong there, sir."

"Then it is the same on land as at sea."

"That is true; we are having a vile fog."

"And which might cause an accident."

The Parisian exclaimed—"Accident! yes, but why all these accidents? What good is done by accidents? It is like the burning of the Odéon Theatre, when many people were thrown out of work. Is that right? Sir, I do not know what your belief is, but I am far from satisfied with the way in which religious matters are arranged."

"No more am I," answered the man from Saint Malo."

"Everything down here," continued the Parisian, "seems out of order; and I have an idea that the hand of Providence is entirely absent."

The man from Saint Malo scratched his head, as though he were endeavouring to comprehend something. The Parisian went on:

"Yes, Providence is certainly not to the fore. There ought to be a decree passed to compel our Ruler to remain at His post. He is most likely at His country house taking a holiday, and so

everything goes crooked. It is evident, my dear sir, that He is no longer at the head of the government, and that He has gone for a holiday, and has during His absence entrusted affairs to some substitute—to some inferior class of angel—some poor creature with the wings of a sparrow, who has charge of earthly matters.”

Captain Clubin, who, during this conversation had drawn near to the speakers, laid his hand upon the Parisian's shoulder. “Silence, sir!” said he. “Take care what you say; we do not talk like that at sea.”

No one made any reply.

Five minutes afterwards the Guernseyman, who had heard all, whispered in the ear of the man from Saint Malo, “Our captain is a really good man.”

There was no rain, and yet all felt wet. No one took any further notice of the course they were steering, but everyone felt uneasy. It seemed as if a feeling of melancholy had fallen upon all. Fog creates silence on the ocean; it calms the wave and stills the wind. In this deep silence, the noise that the *Durande* made as she laboured through the sea had something plaintive and melancholy in it.

They met no more ships. If there were any vessels outside the limits of the fog, towards Guernsey or Saint Malo, the *Durande* would have been invisible to them, concealed as she was in the mist; and her long line of smoke, which appeared to issue from nowhere, looked like a black comet on a white sky.

All of a sudden Clubin shouted out, “You dog! you are steering all abroad again! You will do some mischief before you have finished. You deserve to be put in irons. Get below, you drunkard!” and he snatched the tiller from his hands.

Tangrouille, with an air of shame, slunk away amongst the men who were forward.

The Guernseyman exclaimed, “Now we are all right!”

The vessel still went on at full speed.

About three o'clock the lower part of the fog began to lift, and the sea became once more visible.

“I do not half like this,” said the Guernseyman.

Fog can only be dispersed by the sun or wind. When the sun does it, it is good, but it is not so advantageous when the wind performs this operation. It was too late to-day for the sun to do it. At three o'clock in the afternoon in February the sun has no power. It happens very often that if the wind gets up, at this time it may blow a hurricane before morning.

But to-day, if there was a breeze, it could hardly be felt.

Clubin, with his eyes fixed on the binnacle, and holding the tiller in his hand, muttered to himself some words which reached the ears of the passengers. "No time to be lost; that drunkard has made us lose a great deal of time."

There was no expression of alarm upon his face.

Under the mist the sea was not so calm, and a slight swell could be detected here and there. Small patches of light appeared on the surface of the water. The sailors fixed their eyes upon these. They showed the apertures made by the wind in the overhanging ceiling of fog. The mist lifted again, and then came down more densely than ever.

At times the darkness was profound, and the ship seemed involved in a misty field of ice. Now and then this terrible circle opened like a pair of pincers, gave a momentary view of the horizon, and then closed again.

The Guernseyman, with his telescope in hand, had stationed himself like a look-out on the fore-part of the vessel.

The mist lifted for an instant, and then closed.

The Guernseyman turned round with a look of terror on his face.

"Captain Clubin!" cried he.

"What is it?"

"We are running right upon the Hanois."

"You are in error," answered Clubin, coldly.

The Guernseyman persisted, "I'm certain of it."

"Impossible!"

"I just this moment saw the rock in the offing."

"Where?"

"There!"

"It is the open sea there. You are wrong."

And Clubin still kept the head of the vessel towards the point indicated by the passenger.

Once more the Guernseyman used his telescope, and in another instant came running aft. "Captain!"

"Well?"

"Go about."

"Why?"

"I am sure that I saw a tall rock just ahead; it is the Great Hanois."

"You have only seen a thicker fog-bank."

"It is the Great Hanois; in heaven's name, go about!"

Clubin gave the tiller a turn.

## CHAPTER V.

## CAPTAIN CLUBIN EXCELS HIMSELF.

A LOUD crash was heard. The tearing and rending of a ship's timber on a sunken rock in the open sea is a more melancholy sound than even the saddest dreams have ever pictured. The *Durande* was brought up in a moment.

The shock precipitated several passengers upon the deck, where they rolled over each other in great confusion.

The Guernseyman raised his hands to Heaven.

"We are on the Hanois!" cried he; "just as I said we should be."

One wild cry burst from the group collected together on the deck, "We are lost!" But Clubin's voice, sharp and decisive, choked the exclamation in its birth. "Silence! No one is lost."

The black figure of Imbrancam, naked to the waist, appeared at the hatchway of the engine-room.

With the greatest calmness and self-possession, he uttered these ominous words, "Captain, the water is pouring in, and the fires will soon be extinguished!"

It was a terrible moment. The affair seemed almost suicidal. Had it been done intentionally it could not have been more awful. The *Durande* had rushed upon the rock as if it had been an enemy, and a sharp point had penetrated the timbers of the vessel like a nail; more than a square yard of the planking had been dashed in. The stern was crushed; the shattered prow had opened, and, through a terrible gap in her hull, the waves poured in with a strange and horrible sound. This was the wound through which shipwreck made its entrance. The shock had been so severe that it had shattered the great hooks by which the rudder was suspended, and the rudder itself was torn from its fastenings, and hung grinding against the stern. She had been pierced through and through by the sunken rock, and all around her nothing could be seen but the fog, thick and impenetrable. Night was coming on.

The *Durande* swayed heavily forward, like the horse who feels the horns of the bull buried in its entrails. There was no hope for her. It was slack water.

Tangrouille's intoxication had left him; no one is drunk when there is a wreck to sober him. He went between decks, and came up again in a moment. "Captain," said he, "she is mak-

ing water fast ; in ten minutes it will be up to the scupper-holes."

The passengers ran hither and thither about the deck, wringing their hands and bending over the bulwarks, gazing down at the engines, and making all sorts of useless movements in their terror. The tourist had fainted.

Clubin raised his hand, and all became silent. Then he said to Imbrancam, "How long can you keep the engines going?"

"Five or six minutes."

Then Clubin turned to the Guernseyman and said, "Stand at the helm. You saw the rock. Upon which portion of the Hanois are we?"

"On the Mauve ; just now, as the fog lifted, I recognised it."

"If we are on the Mauve," returned Clubin, "we have the Great Hanois on our port, and the Little Hanois on our starboard bow, and are about a mile from land."

The crew and passengers listened with the deepest anxiety, fixing their eyes upon the captain.

It would not have availed anything to have lightened the ship ; nor, indeed, would it have been possible. In order to throw the cargo overboard it would have been necessary to open the ports, and the water would have at once rushed in. To anchor would have been equally useless, for they were fixed firmly on the rock ; besides, with such holding ground, the anchor would probably have dragged, and the cable fouled. The engines were not damaged, and could be worked as long as the fires were not extinguished—that is to say, for a few minutes more. She might, therefore, have been backed off the rocks, but in the event of that happening she would most likely have settled down at once. The rock, to some extent, acted as a plug, and prevented water entering through the leak ; at any rate, it was an obstacle to its so doing. But if the hole was once thoroughly opened, it would have been impossible to have stopped the leak or worked the pumps. To draw a dagger from a mortal wound is instant death. To back off the rock would be to sink at once.

The oxen, commencing to feel the water gaining upon them, began to bellow piteously.

Clubin gave the command.

"Lower the long-boat."

Imbrancam and Tangrouille hastened to obey the order, and let go the tackle. The rest of the crew looked on with a half-dazed air.

"All hands for lowering the boats," said Clubin.

This time all obeyed.

Clubin, calm and self-possessed, continued to issue his orders in that old sea-language which modern sailors would find it difficult to understand.

"Haul in the rope—bear a hand with a cable, if the capstan will not work—avast heaving—see all the blocks clear—lower away there—bring her down, stern and bow—now then, with a will—all together—easy there—do not lower her stern first—there is too much strain—bring her down handsomely—stand by there !

The long boat was at length lowered.

Just then the Durande's paddles ceased to revolve, and the smoke no longer issued from her funnel—the fires were drowned.

The passengers slipped down the ladder, clinging to every rope and stay on their way down, and tumbled into the long boat. Imbrancam lifted up the senseless tourist, put him into the boat, and then climbed on board again. Directly the passengers had embarked, the crew made a rush for the boat, knocking down the cabin-boy and trampling on him, but Imbrancam interposed. "The boy first !" cried he, and, with his black, muscular arms, he hurled the sailors right and left, and, picking up the boy, lowered him to the Guernseyman, who, standing up in his boat, received the child in his arms. When he saw that the boy was safe, Imbrancam drew on one side, and said to the crew, "You can pass now."

Meanwhile, Clubin had been to his cabin, and had made a parcel of the ship's papers and the instruments. He took the compass from the binnacle, handed the papers and the instruments to Imbrancam, and the compass to Tangrouille, saying, "Get on board."

They obeyed him ; the crew had preceded them. The long boat was almost full, and her gunwale was very near the water.

"Now," said Clubin, "push off !"

A cry arose from the long-boat.

"But you, captain ?"

"I shall remain."

Men leaving a wreck have not much time for deliberation, and still less for indulging in feelings of sentiment. However, those in the long-boat, who were in comparative safety, experienced a sensation which was not entirely selfish. Every voice joined in the same cry, "Come with us, captain."

"I shall remain with my vessel."

The Guernseyman, who possessed some knowledge of the sea, now spoke. "Listen to me, captain. We are on the

Hanois. It is not more than a mile's swim to Plainmont, but in a boat we can only land at Rocquaine, which is double the distance. There is a swell getting up and a nasty fog. We shall not be at Rocquaine before two hours, and then it will be a dark night. The sea and the wind are both rising; a storm is coming on. We shall be willing enough to return and take you off, but if there is much more delay it will be impossible. If you remain here you are lost. Come with us."

As he finished the Parisian added, "The long-boat is full—too full, indeed, and a man more is a man too much; but there are thirteen of us, and that is an unlucky number. It is far better to overload the boat with a man than with an unlucky number. So come, captain."

Tangrouille said, "It is all my fault, and not yours. It is not fair for you to remain."

*I shall* remain," said Clubin. "The vessel will certainly go to pieces in the storm to-night; but for all that I will not leave her. When a ship is lost, the captain is dead. They shall say of me, 'He did his duty to the last. I forgive you, Tangrouille.'"

Then he folded his arms, and exclaimed, "Obey orders; let go the rope, and push off."

The long-boat tossed up and down; Imbrancam had seized the tiller; every hand that was not engaged with an oar was waved to the captain, and every voice cried, "Hurrah for Captain Clubin!"

"There is a gallant fellow!" exclaimed the American.

"Sir!" answered the Guernseyman, "he is the most honest man that ever trod a plank."

Tangrouille burst into tears.

"Had I had the courage," murmured he, "I would have remained with him."

The long boat pushed off into the fog, and was lost to sight in a moment.

Nothing else was in view.

The splash of the oars grew fainter and fainter, and at last died away entirely.

Clubin was left alone.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## A DEPTH REVEALED.

WHEN this man found himself alone on the rock, in the midst of the fog and the waste of waters—far from every living being, no sound of life near him, left as dead—alone between the rising sea and the coming storm—he experienced a feeling of intense pleasure. All had succeeded as he wished.

His dream was about to be fulfilled; the bill which he had drawn upon the future at so long a date was now to be met.

In his eyes, to be deserted was to be saved. He was on the Hanois, only a mile from shore, and he was in possession of seventy-five thousand francs. There was no hitch anywhere. True, he had arranged every step with the greatest care. In his youth, Clubin's idea had been to stake his integrity upon the card-table of life—to pose as an honest man, to start from that point, and to wait for his opportunity, allowing his stakes to accumulate, to await his chance, guess the right moment, to play one card and one only, and to sweep off everything that was before him, leaving fools behind him to bewail their losses. He intended to realize at one stroke what lesser rogues try for twenty times; and, whilst they end on the gallows, he determined to finish his career a rich man. His meeting with Rantaine had been like a ray of light to him, and he had immediately formed his plan to compel Rantaine to disgorge his plunder—to parry his threatened revelations by disappearing, and to pass for dead as the best way of doing so, and as a means of this to wreck the Durande. This last was necessary, and, in addition to all the foregoing, his reputation would still remain intact; indeed, if anything, rather enhanced. Anyone seeing Clubin rejoicing over the wreck might have thought him a demon, happy in the commission of some deadly sin.

He had lived all his life for the moment that had now arrived.

The whole of his character was expressed in the words "*At last!*" A terrible serenity illuminated his gloomy brow; his dull eye—the depth of expression of which seemed fathomless—blazed clear and terrible. The inward fire of his soul was reflected there.

The inner conscience, like exterior nature, has its electric spark: An idea is a meteor. At the moment of success the pent-up designs which preceded it burst asunder, and a spark gleams

out. To have your prey grasped in your cruel hand is a happiness which lightens up the face; an evil thought illuminates every feature. The success of certain combinations, of certain ends attained, of certain cruel instincts, cause gloomy flashes of satisfaction to appear and disappear in men's eyes. It is the pleasure found in a threatening storm, the joy of a menacing dawn, coming from a conscience enveloped in clouds and darkness.

Such evil light shone in his eyes.

No similar light has ever before been seen in this world or elsewhere.

The whole long-repressed wickedness of Clubin's heart burst forth at once.

His eyes pierced the veil of darkness around him, and he could not restrain a burst of hideous laughter.

He was free at last—free and rich. The unknown was opening before him; he had solved the riddle. Clubin had plenty of time before him. The tide was rising, and consequently forced up the Durande. The ship was firmly fixed upon the rock, and there was no fear of her sinking. Besides, time must be given to the long boat to get away—to founder, perhaps. Clubin hoped the latter. Standing on the deck of the Durande, he folded his arms, enjoying his lonely situation in the gloom of night. For thirty years the man had been weighed down beneath his load of hypocrisy. He had been Evil itself, linked with Probity. He loathed virtue like one hates an incompatible helpmate. He had always the premeditation of some dishonest act in his mind; and, since he had come to man's estate, he had worn the dull and heavy armour of appearance. Underneath it he was a demon. He lived under the guise of an honest man, with the soul of a fiend. He was a soft-spoken pirate, a prisoner of honesty; he was enclosed in the cerecloths of innocence, and he carried on his back those angels' pinions so inexpressibly galling to a villain. He was overwhelmed with public esteem. It is hard to pass for a man of honour and probity. Always to have to walk in the same track, to think evil, and act and speak well—this had been indeed a task. He had posed as the shadow of honesty, whilst in reality he was the spectre of crime. He had been a living mass of contradiction. Always compelled to preserve a placid exterior, and to appear what he was not, and in secret to foam at the mouth and grind his teeth. Virtue for him was something that stifled him. He had spent his life longing to bite the hand that closed his mouth, and, instead of biting, he had had to kiss it.

To have lied is to have suffered. A hypocrite is an invalid in the double acceptation of the word—he is enduring a penance while he is working for a triumph. To be constantly planning some wicked act, and to have to cover your intentions with the mask of virtue—to feel that all within is vile and wicked—never to be your real self—to live a double life—is terribly wearing to the mind. With all his black and gloomy thoughts, to put on an outward appearance of candour and honesty—longing to devour those who respect you—to fawn and to put restraint upon yourself—to be ever on your guard, ever on the watch. To put a good face upon the hidden crime of your heart—to change deformity into beauty, and build up a kind of perfection from wickedness—to tickle, as it were, with the point of a dagger—to sweeten the poisoned cup—to put a rein on every movement—to keep a watch upon every word; not to cast a glance without having well considered it—nothing in life can be more painful and repulsive than this. The whole odiousness of hypocrisy is obscurely felt by the hypocrite himself.

It is terribly nauseous to have the goblet of imposture ever presented to your lips. The sweetness of manner which a cunning villain has to assume is hateful to him; nothing is more repugnant to his feelings than to have hypocrisy ever in his mouth. There are moments when the hypocrite feels constrained to vomit forth all his secret thoughts. To have to swallow them down is terrible. Add to all this the feeling of profound pride. There are moments—and strange ones—when the hypocrite absolutely has a good opinion of himself. A rogue is full of egotism.

The serpent and the worm crawl along the ground in the same way, and have the same manner of raising their heads. A traitor is neither more nor less than a fettered despot, who cannot bring himself to play a secondary part. Littleness is capable of every enormity. The true hypocrite is a giant and a dwarf at the same time.

Clubin really believed that he had been ill-treated.

Why had he not been born rich? He would have asked nothing better than to have had a father and mother with a hundred thousand francs a year. Why had he not had them? It was not his fault. Why had he not had all the pleasures of life? He had been forced to work—in other words, to cheat, to betray, to ruin. Why had he been compelled to submit to the torture of fawning, stooping, and flattering, in order to make himself liked and respected, and to wear, night and day, another

face than his own? To practice dissimulation was in itself a hardship. Men hate those they bite. But at last his turn had come—Clubin was avenged.

Upon whom? Upon all, and everything.

He had only received kindness from Lethierry's hands—another cause of grievance—and he had revenged himself on Lethierry. He was revenged upon all those in whose presence he had been obliged to put a constraint on himself. It was his turn now. Whoever had had a good opinion of him was his enemy; he had, to a certain extent, been that man's slave. Clubin had regained his liberty. His exit had been made. What others looked upon as death was, to him, the commencement of a new life. He had cast aside the false Clubin, and put on the true. With one stroke he had done all. He had crushed Rantaine beneath his feet, driven Lethierry to ruin, thrust human justice into darkness, and forced public opinion to err. All humanity he had cast from him, and had blotted out the world.

As for his God, those three letters troubled him but little. He had always been considered a religious man. What was he now?

There are depths in hypocrisy, or, to speak more correctly, hypocrisy is a depth in itself. When Clubin found himself at last alone, his conscience opened, and he had a moment of exquisite pleasure. *He aired his soul.* With all the force of his lungs he drew a deep breath of crime.

The depth of evil in him showed in every feature. Clubin expanded beneath its influence. At that instant, had Rantaine stood beside him, his features, when compared to Clubin's, would have looked like the innocent face of a babe. What a relief it was to tear off that mask! How his mind recoiled to see his crime in all its hideous nudity, and to plunge deeply into the waters of sin!

A protracted life of restraint had forced him at last to long for vice. He felt a certain lascivious enjoyment in wickedness. In these frightful moral abysses, which are so seldom fathomed, there exists a strange and atrocious pleasure, the obscenity of vice. The insipidity of a false reputation gives you a longing for shame. You begin to look upon disgrace with desire, if that disgrace is living at its ease. Eyes that are cast down often glance shyly at sin. The distinction between a Messalina and a Marié Alacoque is not great. Remember La Cadière, and the nun of Louviers. Clubin had for years lived behind the veil, and

open audacity had been his ambition. He envied the bedizened harlot and the brazen brow of the undefined ruffian; he experienced a feeling at having passed for a good man, and a hideous pride in outdoing them both. He was the Tantalus of cynicism. After long years, alone on that rock, he could be frank and open; and he was so. To gloat over all his hidden wickedness, what voluptuous pleasure! Clubin, for a few brief moments, enjoyed all the ecstasies of hell. The long-outstanding debt of dissimulation was paid at last. Hypocrisy is a loan which the Devil pays off. Clubin gave way to the intoxication of being alone with himself and heaven. He cried out aloud, "I am a villain!" and was thoroughly satisfied.

No mind had ever expressed such a strange flood of feeling.

No eruption from the water of a burning mountain is comparable to an outburst of hypocrisy. He was delighted that he was alone, and yet he would have liked a companion that he might have shown his true character to a living witness.

It would have pleased him to have cried out to a fellow-creature, "*You fool!*"

Solitude made him certain of his victory, but took away some of the pleasure to be derived from it.

He alone was the spectator of his own triumph.

To be linked to the galley-slave's chain has its charm; everyone then knows that you are infamous. To compel the crowd to stop and gaze upon you is an act of pain in itself. A galley-slave, standing on a platform in an open square, with his neck firmly fixed in an iron-collar, is the tyrant who compels all looks to be riveted on himself. To be the centre of a circle of admiring eyes, what a grand triumph! To direct the glances of the eyes of the populace, does not that show unbridled supremacy? To those whose ideal is evil, disgrace is a crown of glory. It is a height to look down from. You tower above others in something—a proud position from which you can show yourself—a pillory which all the world can see is not widely different from a throne.

To be held up, whether for good or ill, is to acquire a reputation of one kind or another.

A wicked monarch has all the enjoyments of the pillory. Nero, burning Rome; Louis XIV., siezing upon the Palatine; the Prince Regent, slowly torturing Napoleon to death; Nicholas, murdering Poland in the face of civilised Europe, must all have expressed the same kind of pleasure that now throbbed and beat in every pulse of Clubin's frame.

Universal contempt has a certain amount of grandeur in it. To be unmasked is a defeat, but to unmask yourself is a victory. It is a species of intoxication. It is an insulting and self-satisfied impudence—an insolent nudity which affronts all society. What an acmé of happiness! Such ideas in a hypocrite may seem contradictory, but they are not so. All infamy has reasoning powers. Honey is gall. There is a resemblance between the character of Escobar and the Marquis de Sade. In proof of this we have Leotade. A hypocrite, being vice itself, has in himself the two opposing poles of perversity. He is a saint on one side and a courtesan on the other. His demon sex is a double one. The hypocrite is the monstrous hermaphrodite of evil. He engenders and transforms himself. Do you wish to see him beautiful, look upon this side; hideous, turn to the other. All these thoughts passed through Clubin's mind. He did not understand them all, but he enjoyed them a good deal. A cloud of fiery sparks whirled from the mouth of the pit of hell are emblems of the wild succession of thoughts that filled his soul.

Clubin remained for some time buried in a profound reverie, gazing upon his cast-off honesty as a serpent looks at his old skin.

All the world had had such confidence in this honesty that even he had ended by believing in it a little. He again burst into a fit of laughter.

People would believe that he was dead, and all the time he would be rich. They would believe him drowned, whilst all the time he would be safe and alive. What a splendid trick to play upon the world's imbecility! And in this unusual imbecility Rantaine, too, had played a part. Clubin considered him as beneath contempt—the disdain of the fox for the tiger. Rantaine had failed, he had succeeded. Rantaine had crept away abashed, whilst he, Clubin, was triumphant. He had stepped in between Rantaine and his prize, and had carried it off in triumph. He had no definite plan for the future. He had the bank-notes in the iron box safely deposited in the belt round his waist, and that knowledge was sufficient for him. He would take another name. There were countries where sixty thousand francs would soon realise six hundred thousand. He could solve the riddle by going and living quietly in one of those corners of the world upon the money that he had forced that robber Rantaine to disgorge. He could speculate, do large business, increase his capital, and become a veritable millionaire; there were tons

of gold to be made. He would see. Besides, all these matters were of secondary importance; there was plenty of time to think of them. The difficult part had been got over. To despoil the spoiler and to disappear with the *Durande*, that had been the main point, and it had been accomplished. The rest was all plain sailing. There was no further hindrance—nothing more to be feared. He could swim to shore, and would reach Plainmont in the night, climb the cliff, and go straight to the haunted house; he could get into it easily by means of the knotted cord that he had carefully hidden in a hole in the rocks. In the haunted house he would find his bag, with plenty of dry clothes and provisions in it. He could hide there, and in eight days the Spanish smuggler would be there. Blasquito would come to Plainmont, and for a few guineas would take him, not to Tor Bay, as he had mentioned, to divert suspicion, but to Passage, or Bilbao. From there he could easily get to Vera Cruz, or to New Orleans. But now the time had arrived to take to the water; the long-boat would be a good way off. An hour's swim was nothing to Clubin, and there was only a mile between himself and the shore; for was he not on the Hancis? At this moment the fog suddenly lifted, and Clubin saw before him the formidable peaks of the Douvres Rocks in all their hideous nudity.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE UNFORESEEN INTERFERERS.

CLUBIN, overwhelmed at the discovery, stared round him. It was too true; he was on that lonely and isolated rock. It was impossible for him not to recognise their irregular outline. The twin peaks of the Douvres stood up before him in all their native hideousness. The narrow passage between them, which looked like a trap for the wayfarers of the sea, was distinctly visible. It resembled some murderous ambuscade which the dwellers in the sea had prepared for the denizens of the land.

They were close to him. Up to this time the fog, acting as their accomplice, had concealed them from view. The fog had misled Clubin, and had made him take a wrong course. In spite of all his attention, the same accident had happened to him that many celebrated navigators had experienced: for instance,

Gonzalez—who had discovered Cape Blanco, and Fernandez—who had discovered Cape Verd. The fog, which had been so convenient for the execution of his design, but which had also its perils, was clearing off. Clubin's error arose from keeping too much towards the west. When the Guernseyman had fancied that he recognised the Hanois, Clubin had given the decisive turns to the helm, thinking that the head of the vessel was straight for those rocks. The *Durande*—whose timbers had been pierced by one of the sunken reefs which extend some distance from the main rocks—was not separated from the peaks of the Douvres by more than two cable lengths. Some two hundred yards further on was a huge mass of granite; upon its precipitous sides were some small indentations, at irregular intervals, which might afford assistance in climbing it. The square corners on the summit showed that some kind of a platform existed there.

It was the Man-Rock.

The Man-Rock rises to even a greater height than the Douvres, and the platform on its summit overlooks the two inaccessible peaks of the latter. The crumbling edges of the platform had a certain rough kind of regularity. No more solitary or melancholy spot could be imagined. The waves rolled calmly in against the square sides of this gigantic and gloomy fragment, which seemed as though it were placed there to serve as a refuge for the mighty phantoms of sea and earth. All around was calm and peaceful, not a ripple on the sea, not a breath of wind in the air.

Clubin had often seen these rocks from a distance, and soon satisfied himself as to his true position.

There could be no doubt of it now.

It was a strange and terrible dilemma. The Douvres instead of the Hanois. Five leagues of ocean instead of one mile between himself and safety. The unhappy mariner cast upon these rocks has the visible and palpable presence of death ever before him. From them there is no chance of gaining the land. Clubin shuddered. He had of his own free will ventured within the very jaws of death. No other refuge was left for him but the Man-Rock. It was very probable that there would be a storm that night, and that the long-boat, overcrowded as she was, would founder, so that no intelligence of the wreck would reach the land. It would not even be known that Clubin was on the Douvres. There was nothing before him but the prospect of a lingering death from cold and hunger. His



seventy-five thousand francs would not purchase the smallest mouthful of bread. The course which he had pursued with so much care had only ended in this. He had been the careful architect of his own destruction. No chance of aid, no possible hope of escape—his triumph ending in a fatal precipice, his deliverance in a hideous imprisonment; instead of a long and prosperous career, a lingering and agonising death. In the twinkling of an eye—in a lightning's flash—all his plans had crumbled away. The paradise that the demon had hoped to enjoy had taken its real aspect—that of a tomb.

And now a slight breeze had sprung up, and the fog, divided and pierced by it, floated away in huge and misshapen masses, and permitted the surface of the ocean to be seen.

The cattle in the hold, finding the water gaining upon them, bellowed plaintively.

Night was coming on, and with it most likely a storm.

The rising tide began to fill the *Durande* slowly, and she commenced to swing from right to left, and from left to right, turning on the rock upon which she was fixed like a pivot. The moment was not far distant when a wave would sweep her from her position, and throw her over on her side. It was not so dark as it had been when she struck. Though it was later in the day there was much more light, for the fog was clearing away, and much of the gloom had disappeared with it. The western sky was almost free from it. Twilight has generally a pale sky, and this pallid light illuminated the sea. The *Durande* was lying in a sloping position, with her head higher than her stern. Olubin climbed onto the taffrail, which was high out of the water, and swept the horizon with eager glance. One of the characteristics of the true hypocrite is to be very sanguine. The hypocrite is always ready to pounce upon a chance. Hypocrisy is nothing more than a terrible species of hopefulness, and the foundation of its falsehood, mingled with that divine feeling, forms a vice.

Strange as it may be, there is a sort of truthfulness in hypocrisy. The hypocrite believes in some power coming—he knows not whence—which permits the course of evil.

Olubin still gazed seawards with the greatest anxiety. He said to himself that, now the fog was clearing, vessels that had been lying-to or riding at anchor would certainly resume their course, and he thought it likely that some might pass within sight of the rock.

His prevision proved correct, for a sail appeared on the

horizon, and gradually drew nearer. She was coming from the east, and steering west. As she approached he could make out her rig. She had one mast, and was schooner-rigged; her bowsprit was almost horizontal. She was a cutter.

In half-an-hour's time she would pass pretty close to the Douvres.

"I am saved!" thought Clubin. In the terrible strait in which he found himself, his first thought was for his life. The cutter looked like a foreign vessel—very likely it was a smuggler, bound for Plainmont. Who knows if it were not Blasquito himself? In that case not only was his life preserved, but his fortune would be saved, and the wreck on the Douvres would bring about the end more speedily, and do away with the necessity of a tedious concealment in the haunted house, and the whole affair would be finished off where it began—at sea. A very fortunate occurrence. Once more his dark soul rejoiced over the prospect of ultimate success. Rogues of all kinds have a strange feeling that they merit success.

There was but one course for him to pursue.

The *Durande* was so far on to the rocks that their peaks and projections were mingled with her outline, so that from a distance she was hardly distinguishable, and in the fading light would most likely be passed unseen. But a human being, standing out dark and distinct against the pale sky, and making signals of distress from the summit of the Man-Rock, would certainly attract attention, and a boat would be lowered immediately to rescue the castaway. The Man-Rock was only about two hundred yards distant. Nothing was more simple than to swim to it and climb it; but there was not a moment to be lost. The forepart of the *Durande* being high on the rocks, it was from the very part upon which Clubin was standing that it was necessary to plunge. He commenced by taking soundings, and found that there was plenty of water under the stern. The minute shells which adhered to the line showed that large caverns existed below, in which the water was always calm, however rough the surface of the sea might be.

He undressed himself, and threw his clothes upon the deck. He knew that he should get others on board the cutter, but he took especial care to retain his leather belt. When he had stripped he examined it, and readjusted the buckle; then he cast a rapid glance at the course that he must take through the breakers to reach the Man-Rock, and then plunged headforemost into the sea.

As he dived from a great height, he sank far beneath the surface.

Down, down he went below the wave, reached the bottom, touched it, skirted for an instant the submarine reefs, and then, with a spring, prepared to return to the surface.

At that moment something seized his foot, and drew him forcibly backwards.

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## BOOK VII.

*THE DANGER OF THOUGHTLESSLY OPENING  
A BOOK.*

## CHAPTER I.

## A PEARL AT THE FOOT OF A PRECIPICE.

A FEW minutes after his brief conversation with *Sieur Landoys*, *Gilliatt* was at *Saint Sampson*. He was half-mad with anxiety. What could have happened?

*Saint Sampson* was all in a hubbub, like a disturbed hive of bees. Every one of the inhabitants was at his door. People were talking eagerly together, with violent gestures, and forming little knots, which discussed some event that had recently occurred. Every now and then the words, "What a frightful misfortune!" were heard; but upon some faces there was an expression of satisfaction. *Gilliatt* asked no questions. His was not a nature to be satisfied with questioning people with whom he had no sympathy. He distrusted gossip at secondhand, and, determining to learn all from its source, went straight to *Les Bravées*.

His anxiety was so great that he even ventured to enter the house; besides, the door leading into the hall on the ground-floor was open. A group of men and women were crowding round it. Everyone was going in, and he went in with them. As he was entering he found *Sieur Landoys* on the threshold, who whispered to him, "You, doubtless, know what has taken place?"

"No."

"I did not wish to shout it out to you from the road. One seems too much like a bird of ill-omen in doing so."

"What is the matter?"

"The *Durande* is lost!"

The hall was crowded.

People whispered to each other, and spoke in low tones of voice, as though they were in the room of a sick person.

The crowd, which was composed of those living near, the first comers, the passers-by, and the curious, were all huddled

together near the door, leaving the other end of the room free. Lethierry and Déruchette were there, the latter weeping bitterly, the former standing up, leaning against the wall; the sailor's hat was drawn well over his eyes, a lock of grey hair hung down his cheek. He did not speak a word; his arms were hanging listlessly by his side; he scarcely appeared to breathe. He resembled some inanimate object propped up against the wall.

As the spectators gazed upon him, it was easy for them to see that a man stood before them whose life had been ruined. The Durande was lost and Lethierry had lost with her one of the strongest ties that bound him to life. He had another self on the waters, and that self had foundered. What was to become of him now? To get up in the morning and to go to bed in the evening. Never more to look for the return of the Durande, or to watch her departure. What is an existence worth without an object? To eat, to drink, and then—— The man had crowned the work of his life by a masterpiece, and had exhausted all his means and efforts in attaining the highest point on the hill of progress. That point was lost, that masterpiece was dead. What was the use of lingering on in this world for a few more years without an object? What good was it? No aim in life. He was too old to begin the battle of life again; besides, he was ruined. Poor old man! Déruchette was seated in a chair near him weeping bitterly, and holding one of Lethierry's hands in hers; her hands were clasped over his, which was tightly clenched. The difference between their sorrows was clearly shown; in clasped hands there is a shade of hope, in the clenched fist, nothing but despair. Mess. Lethierry resigned his hand to her, and let her do as she liked. He was perfectly passive. The thunderbolt that had fallen had almost crushed out every remnant of life in him.

There is a depth of sorrow far beyond the reach of the sympathy of your fellow-creatures. The forms of those moving about the room seem indistinct and blurred. They approach you without appearing to come near you. You are far away from them, and they cannot come to you. The depths of happiness and despair have this difference: When plunged in the abyss of the latter the outer world seems something very far off. You are ignorant of the very existence of the dwellers in it. You lose all knowledge, even of your own life. At such times you hardly believe that you are flesh and bone. Life appears but an empty dream. Mess. Lethierry's fixed and expressionless

face showed that he had reached that pitch. The people in the hall whispered amongst themselves, and retailed the news they had heard. The tidings were these :

The *Durande* had been lost the evening before on the Douvres Rocks during a fog, about an hour before sunset. The crew and passengers were all saved, but the captain had refused to quit the ship. A heavy squall from the south-west, which sprang up as the fog disappeared, had placed the *Long-boat* in the greatest jeopardy, and had driven them out to sea beyond Guernsey. During the night they had had the good fortune to cross the *Cashmere's* course, and they had been picked up and brought safely to Saint Pierre Port. The misfortune was entirely the fault of the helmsman, who had been arrested. Clubin's conduct was beyond all praise.

There were numerous pilots in the groups assembled to discuss the news, who shrugged their shoulders when the Douvres were mentioned. "A nasty place to stop at," remarked one of them. A compass and a number of papers and log-books lay on the table. These were doubtless those that Clubin had handed to Imbrancam and Tangrouille at the moment of their leaving the ship. They observed the sublime self-denial of the man who, at the moment when death was so close to him, could remember his duty to his employer. A magnificent evidence of unselfish courage.

All were unanimous in praising Clubin's conduct, and everyone believed that he would be saved, after all. The cutter *Shealtiel* had come into port some hours after the arrival of the *Cashmere*, and brought the latest news. For the last twenty-four hours she had been in the same waters as the *Durande*; she had lain-to during the fog, and run before the wind when the squall came on. The captain of the *Shealtiel* was one of the crowd. At the moment that Gilliatt entered, the captain had told his tale to Mess. Lethierry. His story seemed to be a true one. Towards morning, when the wind had lulled, he had heard the lowing of oxen at sea. This sound, in a place so different from fields and meadows, surprised him a good deal, and he had steered in its direction, and soon perceived the *Durande* fast upon the Douvres. The sea was sufficiently calm for him to get close to her. He hailed her, but the bellowing of the cattle, who were being drowned in the hold, was the only answer that he received. He was perfectly sure that there was no one on board the *Durande*. In spite of the squall of the previous evening, the wreck still held well together, and Clubin could easily have spent the night

there ; he was not the sort of man to allow himself to be swept off it very easily. At any rate he was not on board, and therefore the chances were that he was saved. A number of sloops and luggers, belonging both to Guernsey and Saint Malo, which had been compelled by the fog to lay-to, must have passed very close to the Douvres, and it was most likely that Captain Clubin had been taken off the rock by one of them. When the long boat pushed off she was much overloaded, and ran considerable risks ; another man in her might have caused her to founder, and it was that, chiefly, which had induced Clubin to remain on the *Durande*. But, after having performed this duty, he would have had no hesitation in availing himself of any chance of safety that might have offered itself. A man may be a hero without being a fool. The idea of suicide in a man of Clubin's character was preposterous. The person to be blamed was Tangrouille, and not Clubin. All longed for his return, that they might carry him round the town in triumph. This last news established two facts—the one, that Clubin was saved ; the other, that the *Durande* was lost.

As far as regarded the *Durande*, there appeared to be no remedy for the catastrophe. The captain of the *Shealtiel* had been present at the last scene of the wreck. The pointed rock upon which the *Durande* had impaled herself had held her tightly all night, as if it wished to keep the vessel for its own, and had therefore struggled against the force of the storm ; but at the moment when the captain of the *Shealtiel* had made sure that there was no human being on board, and was preparing to run for port, one of those enormous billows, which seem like the last angry blows of the storm, struck her, tore her violently from her resting place, and, with the swiftness and precision of an arrow, dashed her between the two Douvres rocks. “I heard,” said the captain, “a hideous crashing of timber.” The *Durande* was lifted up by the force of the waves to a certain height, and jammed tightly between the two rocks, and was now even more securely fixed than she had been on the sunken reef. There she was, hung up and exposed to all the violence of wind and sea. According to the evidence of the crew of the *Shealtiel*, the *Durande* was nearly broken up, and would have inevitably sunk during the night, had she not been held up by the rock. The captain of the *Shealtiel* had taken a good survey of her through his telescope, and, with all a sailor's precision, he gave an account of the damage that she had sustained. The star-board-quarter stove in, the masts broken off, the canvas blown

out of the bolt-ropes, the shrouds broken away, the cabin skylight smashed by one of the booms falling upon it, the cuddy-house utterly destroyed, the hinges of the rudder broken, and the trusses torn away; the shear-rails carried away, and the stern port broken. There were terrible traces of the force of the storm. The sea had made a clean sweep of all the cargo that had been piled up before the foremast, and chains, pulleys, and ropes, had all disappeared. The *Durande* had broken her back, and must go entirely to pieces in the course of a few days. But the most remarkable thing was that the engines—and this proved the excellence of their manufacture—had hardly sustained any damage. The captain of the *Shealtiel* was almost certain that the shaft had not been injured. The masts had gone by the board, but the funnel remained firm. The iron-railing of the bridge had been twisted, and the paddle-boxes had suffered a little damage; the frames were rather knocked about, but the wheels themselves appeared scarcely to have a float missing. The engines were entirely unhurt. Such was the impression of the captain of the *Shealtiel*. The engineer, Imbrancam, who was passing from one knot of talkers to another, shared this conviction. This negro, who possessed more intelligence than many white men, was passionately devoted to the engines. He raised his arms, and, opening his ten black fingers, said to Lethierry, as he stood there in silence and gloom, "Master, the machinery is alive yet."

As it seemed certain that Clubin was alive, and that the hull of the *Durande* was irretrievably lost, the engines became the general topic of conversation. They talked about them as if they were living creatures. They went into ecstasies over their good behaviour. "They have been well put together," exclaimed a French sailor. "A right down good one," responded a Guernsey fisherman. "She must be a wonder to come out of all that, with only a few scratches," remarked the captain of the *Shealtiel*. Little by little the engines became the one topic of conversation. They argued warmly about them; they took sides for and against. More than one of those who possessed a smart sailing-boat, and who hoped to pick up some of the *Durande's* business, were not sorry that the Douvres had made such short work of the new invention. The discussion became louder, and now and then all voices were lowered, as they looked at Lethierry, who still maintained the same death-like silence.

After a long conversation, they came to this conclusion: The engines were the most important part of the vessel. To build



a new ship was easy, but to construct a new engine was impossible. The machinery was unique of its kind. Not only was money wanting to make a new one, but where could the skilled labour be found? It was remembered that the constructor was dead. It had cost forty thousand francs. No one would risk such a heavy sum upon a mere chance; the more so, that it had been shown that steamers were as liable to misfortune as other vessels, and the wreck of the *Durande* had swept away all recollection of the success that she had previously achieved. Still, it was a sad thing to think that the engine was still whole and in excellent condition, but that in five or six days it would be knocked to pieces, as well as the ship itself. As long as it existed, the wreck was not complete. It was only the loss of the engines that would place the catastrophe beyond the reach of remedy. To save the machinery would, in a great measure, atone for the loss of the vessel. Save the machinery! It was an easy thing to say, but who would undertake it? Was it possible? To design and to execute are as widely different things as are dreams and realities; and if ever a dream was visionary and impracticable, it was that of saving the engines of the *Durande*. The mere idea of sending a vessel and a crew to the *Douvres* was the height of absurdity, and could not be entertained for a moment. It was the bad season. In the very first gale the chain-cables would be cut through by the sharp-edged reefs, and the vessel drawn upon the rocks. The attempt to remedy one wreck would only result in another. On the narrow platform upon which, according to report, one miserable human being had already died of hunger, there was only room for one man. In order, therefore, to save the engine it was necessary that one man should go to the *Douvres*, and go there alone—alone in the midst of that desolate sea—alone, five leagues from the mainland—alone in that terrible spot—alone for whole weeks at a stretch—alone with dangers anticipated and dangers that had never occurred to the mind, without supplies, and exposed to all the chances of being left unaided in misery and distress, without any human companionship, save the bleached bones of that poor wretch who had yielded up his life on the inhospitable rock. And how could anyone set about the rescue of the engine? He must not only be a sailor, but also a blacksmith. Then, what trials must he not undergo? Would the man who would undertake such a task be a hero or a madman? A madman he would certainly be; for in some attempts, disproportioned to human powers, the effort would not be called

bravery, but madness. And would it not be the height of folly to risk one's life for a lot of old iron? No; no one would be found to visit the Douvres. The engine must be given up, like the rest of the vessel. The man for such a task was not likely to come forward. Where, indeed, could they hope to find him? All these, and many similar remarks, were bandied about amongst the crowd.

The captain of the *Shealtiel*, who had for many years been a pilot, summed up the general opinion in these words: "No, it is all over. There is not a man in the world who would go to the Douvres and save the engines."

"If I do not go," said Imbrancam, "it is because the attempt could never prove successful."

The captain of the *Shealtiel* made a gesture with his left hand, which affirmed his opinion of the impossibility of the task.

"If there was such a man ——" continued he.

Déruchette turned sharply round.

"I would marry him," said she.

There was a moment's silence.

Then a man, with a face of deadly pallor, made his way through the crowd, and said, in a low voice, "You would marry him, Miss Déruchette?"

It was Gilliatt.

Every eye was cast upon him. Mess. Lethierry raised himself into an upright position, with a strange light gleaming in his eyes. He lifted his sailor's cap from his head and threw it at his feet. Then he ran his eye over the assembled crowd, but evidently without seeing any of them, and said, "Déruchette should marry him. I call upon God to witness my promise!"

## CHAPTER II.

### SURPRISE ON THE WESTERN COAST.

On the night which followed this eventful day the moon rose at ten o'clock. But though the night was fine, and wind and sea favourable, no fisherman thought of putting out, either to Hogué le Perre, or to Bourdeaux, or Houmet Benet, or Platon, or Port Grat, or Vazon Bay, or Perrelle Bay, or to Pezeriee, or to Talle, or to the Bay of Saints, or to Petit Bô, or to any other

harbour or little port in Guernsey—and all for the simple reason that at midday a cock had been heard to crow.

When the cock crows at an unusual hour it is a sign that there will be no fish. That evening, however, a fisherman returning to Omptolle experienced a great surprise. On the hill above Houmet Paradis, beyond the two Brayes and the two Grunes, is the beacon of Plattes Fougères (which is in the shape of a black cask upside down) on the left, and on the right that of Saint Sampson, which has the form of a man's head. The fisherman thought that he caught sight of a third beacon. What could this beacon be? Who had placed it there? and from what shoals was it to warn off mariners? Without hesitation, the beacon answered all these questions by moving. It was the mast of a boat. This only added the more to the fisherman's astonishment. A beacon would have been strange enough, but a mast was more wonderful still. No one would go out to fish. Who could it be that was putting out to sea, when everyone else was making for land? Who could it be, and what was he doing?

Ten minutes later the mast, which continued to advance slowly, arrived near the fisherman from Omptolle. He could not see whose boat it was, but he could hear someone pulling—two oars were certainly at work. Evidently there was only one occupant of the boat. The wind was from the north, and the man was pulling to catch the wind beyond Point Fontenelle, from whence he would, no doubt, set his sail. His intention, evidently, was to double Ancresse and Mount Crovel. What could be the meaning of it all? The boat passed on its way, and the fisherman returned home. On that same night, on the west coast of Guernsey, the boat was seen by various watchers, at different times and at different places.

As the fisherman of Omptolle was dropping anchor, a waggoner, with a load of seaweed, some half-a-mile further on, as he was urging on his horses over the lonely road to Clotures, near the Druidical Stone, in the vicinity of the Martello Towers, Nos. 6 and 7, saw, a long way out at sea, in a spot very little frequented, because of its dangerous navigation, not far from Roque Nord and Sablonneuse, a sail being hoisted. This, however, interested him very little, as he was a carrier of seaweed, and not a sailor.

About half-an-hour after the waggoner had seen the boat, a plasterer, returning from his work in the town, and passing by the Lake of Pelée, found himself almost face to face with a boat which was being boldly sailed among the rocks of the Quenon,

the Rousse de Mer, and the Gripe de Rousse. The night was very dark, but it was clear out at sea—as is very often the case, and it was easy to see any boats that were out; and this was the only one. A little further down the coast, and later on in the night, a lobster-catcher, preparing his pots on the sands which separate Port Soil from Port Enfer, could not understand what a boat could be doing that was gliding between the Boue Corneille and La Moulrette; the man in charge of it must have known the coast well, or have been in a great hurry to reach his destination, to have run so great a risk.

As eight o'clock struck at the Catel, the man who kept the public-house at Cobo Bay perceived, to his great surprise, a sail far out at sea, beyond the Boue de Jardin and the Grunettes, and very near the Suzanno and the Western Grunes.

Not very far from Cobo Bay, upon the lonely point of Houmet de la Baie Vason, two young lovers are lingering over their farewells. The girl was just whispering, "If I leave you, it is not because I do not love to be with you, but because I have no choice but to do so," when their parting kiss was interrupted by the sight of a large boat, passing them very closely in the direction of the Messellettes.

Monsieur Le Peyre des Norgiots, living at Cotillon Pipet, was engaged, at about nine o'clock in the evening, in examining a hole which had been made in the hedge of his enclosure by some pilferers. Even whilst he was estimating the extent of his damage he saw, with surprise, a fishing-boat standing boldly out to the Crocq Point at that late hour.

The day after a storm, when the sea is always rather turbulent, this was a very dangerous passago to select, unless, indeed, the helmsman was thoroughly well acquainted with the position of the various rocks and shoals.

At Equerrier, at half-past nine, a trawler, who was bringing home his nets, suddenly stopped and endeavoured to make out an object, which he fancied must be a boat, between Colombelle and La Soufferesse. This boat was in a particularly perilous situation, for the wind sometimes swept round there in sudden and dangerous gusts. The Soufferesse Rock, which is also known as the Blower, is so called because of the gusts of wind which it is supposed to send forth against boats which venture in its vicinity.

The moon had risen, the tide was at its full, and the sea was quite calm in the Strait of Li Hou, when the look-out upon the island was much alarmed at seeing a long black object pass

between his eyes and the moon. This object was narrow and dark, and looked like a coffin gliding along by itself. It sped along beneath that species of wall which is formed by the crests of the rock. The look-out man almost fainted, believing that the Black Lady had appeared to him. The White Lady inhabits the *Tau de Pez d'Amont*; the Grey Lady dwells in *Tau de Pez d'Aval*; the Red Lady, *Les Silleuses*, which lie to the north of the *Banc Margins* and the Black Lady, the *Grand Etacré*, west of *Li Houmet*. At night, under the pale light of the moon, these ladies issue from their hiding-places, and, whilst wandering about, sometimes meet.

There was a chance that that black shadowy form was a sail; the long ridges of rocks upon which it appeared to walk might easily conceal the hull of a vessel passing behind them, and leaving only the sail visible. But the look-out man vainly asked himself what boat would dare the dangerous channel between *Li Hou* and *La Pecheresse*, and the *Angullières* and *Lérée Point*. And what would be its object? He thought it much more likely to have been the Black Lady.

Just as the moon passed over the clock-tower of *Saint Pierre du Bois*, the sergeant of the guard at *Chateau Rocquaine*, as he was raising the drawbridge, fancied that he perceived at the mouth of the bay—further out than the *Haute Canée*, but nearer than the *Sambule*—a sailing-vessel running from the north to the south.

There is a bay on the southern coast of *Guernsey*, immediately at the back of *Plainmont*, surrounded all round with precipices and rocky walls. In this bay there is a singular landing-place, which a French gentleman—a resident on the island since the year 1855—has called “The Port on the Fourth Story,” and this name has been almost universally adopted. At the time of which we write, this port was known as *Moie*. It is a platform cut out of the rock—half the work of nature, and half the handiwork of man—rising some forty feet above the surface of the water, and communicating with the sea by two thick boards forming an inclined plane, parallel with each other. Boats are drawn up there by the aid of a chain and pulley, and glide up and down them as if they were rails. There is a ladder for the use of the boatmen. This landing-stage was much used by the smugglers. Being very little frequented, it was much affected by them.

About eleven o'clock some smugglers—perhaps the very same with whom *Clubin* had made his arrangements—were on this

platform of Moie, with their packages of goods. The dealers in contraband always keep a good look-out—indeed, it is a necessity of their profession; and they were much surprised at seeing a sail suddenly appear beyond the dark outline of Cape Plainmont. It was a bright moonlight night. The smugglers gave a careful eye to this sail, fearing that it might be a Preventive cutter, which was about to lie in wait for them behind the Great Hanois. But the boat left the Hanois astern, making for the Boue Blondel in a north-westerly direction, and beating out to sea, was speedily lost in the pale clouds of the horizon.

“Where the devil can that boat be going to?” asked the smugglers of each other.

That same night, after the sun had set, some one knocked at the door of the Bû de la Rue. The applicant for admission was a boy, dressed in a brown coat and yellow stockings, which showed that he was a young parish school-boy. Every door and window in the Bû de la Rue was hermetically closed. An old woman, seeking for shell-fish and other sea produce, who was wandering about the beach with a lantern in her hand, hailed the boy, and the following conversation ensued:

“Who do you want, my boy?”

“The man who lives here.”

“He is not at home.”

“Where is he?”

“I do not know.”

“Will he be here to-morrow?”

“I do not know.”

“Has he gone away?”

“I do not know.”

“Because, mother, the new rector, the Reverend Ebenezer Caudray wishes to pay him a visit.”

“I do not know.”

“His reverence sent me here to ask if the man who lives at the Bû de la Rue will be at home to-morrow morning.”

“I do not know.”

## CHAPTER III.

## A QUOTATION FROM THE BIBLE.

**DURING** the twenty-four hours that followed, Mess. Lethierry neither eat, drank, or slept; he kissed Déruchette, asked about Clubin, concerning whom no news had yet arrived, signed a declaration that he had no complaint to bring against Tangrouille, and procured his discharge. All that day and the next he remained leaning upon the table, neither standing up or sitting down, only answering gently when he was spoken to. Public curiosity had now satisfied itself, and solitude reigned at Les Bravées. There is often a good deal of curiosity concealed beneath the mask of condolence. The door of the house was closed, and Lethierry was left alone with Déruchette. The momentary light that had flashed from Lethierry's eyes had become extinct, and the air of melancholy which his features had worn ever since the announcement of the catastrophe had returned.

Déruchette was terribly uneasy about him, and, acting on the advice of Grace and Douce, had placed on the table, by his side, a pair of stockings which he had begun to knit when the evil news first came to his ears.

When he noticed this he smiled bitterly and muttered, "Do they think that I am mad?"

After a quarter of an hour's silence he added :

"When one is happy these things are well enough."

Déruchette removed the stockings, and also took advantage of the opportunity to hide the compass and the ship's papers, which she fancied that Mess. Lethierry looked at too much.

In the afternoon, a little before tea-time, the door opened, and two men, dressed in black, entered the room. One was old, and the other young. The younger man has already appeared in the pages of this story.

Both of the men had a grave and serious expression, but even in this they differed essentially. The elder man had what may be called the seriousness of his profession; the younger, the seriousness of his nature. Dress endowed one with it; thought, the other.

Both were clergymen, and, from their dress, members of the Established Church.

The first thing that would have struck an observer in regard to the younger man was that this seriousness, which, though it

showed itself plainly in his looks, and was the result of inward conviction, was not so apparent in his person. Seriousness is not incompatible with passion, which it exalts, whilst it purifies it.

As he was a priest he must have been, at least, twenty-five years of age, though he scarcely looked eighteen. There seemed a curious contrast between his nature and his mind, which were otherwise in perfect harmony—that, whereas his mind seemed made for all the most exalted flights of religion, his nature seemed formed to love and to be loved. His complexion was fresh and rosy, and, in his plain and simple costume, his figure was delicate and elegant; his cheeks were as fair as those of a young girl, and his hands exquisitely formed. All his motions were graceful and unstudied, though kept under restraint. Everything about him was pleasing, elegant, and almost voluptuous. The beauty of his glance corrected this excess of grace. His frank smile, which showed his teeth—regular as those of a child—had a mixture of sadness and religion; he had the aristocratic bearing of a page and the dignified authority of a bishop.

Under his thick fair hair—so golden in its hue as almost to give the idea of coquetry—rose his high white forehead, frank and open as the day. A slight double line between the two eyebrows gave a vague idea that the bird of thought was hovering, with outstretched wings, over the centre of that forehead. When gazing upon him, you felt that you saw one of those pure and innocent creatures who progress in an inverse sense to vulgar humanity; whom illusion renders wise, and in whom experience creates enthusiasm. Through the transparency of youth you could easily perceive the interior maturity. Compared with the grey-haired priest who accompanied him, at the first glance, he looked like the son, but a second almost made you think that he was the father.

The elder priest was none other than Doctor Jaquemin Hérode, who belonged to the High Church, which is a kind of Papacy without a Pope. The Church of England was, at that time, struggling with those tendencies which have since been affirmed and conducted into Puseyism. Doctor Jaquemin Hérode belonged to that shade of Anglicanism which is almost identical with the Church of Rome. He was arrogant, precise, stiff, and authoritative. His interior vision scarcely took in the affairs of this world. He was all for the altar, but was quite forgetful of the spirit. His manner was mighty, and his appearance



imposing; he had more the appearance of a Cardinal than of a simple Protestant clergyman. His coat was cut in the fashion of a cassock. His proper sphere would have been Rome. He was a born prelate of the chamber. He seemed to have come into the world especially to form an ornament at a Papal Court, and to walk behind the pontifical chair in all the splendour of ecclesiastical magnificence. The accident of his having been born an Englishman, and brought up a Protestant, and one who modelled his conduct more by the Old than the New Testament, had prevented his achieving this high distinction. All his honours were summed up thus: Rector of Saint Pierre Port, Dean of Guernsey, and Surrogate of the Bishop of Winchester. No doubt these were positions of great dignity.

But all these honours did not prevent the Rev. Jaquemin Hérode from being a very worthy man. As a theologian he was highly thought of by those who were considered good judges, and had attained a reputation in the Court of Arches, which may be looked upon as the English Sorbonne. He had an air of great learning. His teeth were a little prominent; his upper lip was thin, and his lower one thick; he was a member of several learned societies; a valuable prebend; had baronets among his friends, the full confidence of his bishop, and a Bible which never left his pocket.

Mess. Lethierry was so entirely buried in thought that the entrance of the two clergymen merely produced a slight bending of the brows.

Mons. Jaquemin Hérode advanced towards him, bowed, and, in a few calm and dignified words, referred to his recent promotion in the Church, and added that, according to custom, he came to introduce his successor to his new parishioners, and that the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray was now Mess. Lethierry's new spiritual adviser.

Déruchette rose.

The young clergyman, who was the Rev. Ebenezer, rose also.

Mess. Lethierry looked at the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray, and muttered, between his teeth, "A bad sailor!"

Grace brought chairs, and the two reverend gentlemen sat down by the table.

Then Doctor Hérode began to speak. He had heard of the catastrophe that had taken place—that the *Durande* had been wrecked—he had come in the character of a clergyman to offer consolation and advice. The wreck was a misfortune in many ways, yet he hoped that it might not prove entirely

unprofitable. Let us search into our own hearts. Are we not too often unduly exalted by worldly prosperity? Too long a sojourn by the waters of happiness is perilous. We must not take all misfortunes as an unmixed evil. The ways of the Lord are a mystery. Perhaps Mess. Lethierry was a ruined man. What of that? To be wealthy was often to peril your salvation. There were such things as false friends. Well, poverty would separate them from you.

You remain alone—*solus eris*. The Durande was reported to bring in a thousand pounds a year. This was too large a sum for the wise. Let us fly from temptation, despise gold, and accept, with much resignation, poverty and ruin. Isolation bears good fruit—through it the grace of the Almighty is obtained. It was in solitude that Aiah discovered the warm springs, when leading the asses of his father, Sebeon. Let us not rebel against the inscrutable designs of Providence. That holy man, Job, before his troubles, had believed in wealth. Who can say if the loss of the Durande might not bring some compensations, even in this world? Even he, Doctor Jaquemin Hérode, had invested some of his fortune in an excellent undertaking now in progress at Sheffield. If Mess. Lethierry would invest the remnants of his property in it he might make another fortune. It was for the purpose of supplying arms to the Czar for subjugating Poland. They calculated on making about three hundred per cent.

The words "the Czar" seemed to arouse Lethierry. He interrupted the Doctor: "I don't want to have anything to do with the Czar."

The Reverend Hérode replied, "Mess. Lethierry, princes are Heaven's vice-regents. 'Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.' In this case the Czar is Cæsar."

Mess. Lethierry, who had again fallen back into his dreamy mood, murmured, "Cæsar! Who is that? I do not know him."

The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode renewed his exhortations. He did not insist upon Sheffield. To despise a Cæsar was to be a Republican, so that Mess. Lethierry had better turn his thoughts towards investing money in a Republic. He could make a fortune in the United States even more quickly than in England. If he desired to invest what remained to him in a most profitable manner, he had merely to take shares in a great company formed for developing the plantations of Texas, where more than twenty thousand negroes were employed.

"I won't have anything to do with slavery," said Mess. Lethierry.

"Slavery is an institution sanctioned by Holy Writ," retorted the Reverend Hérode. "Is it not written, 'If a man shall smite his slave he shall go unpunished, for he is his money?'"

Grace and Douce, standing upon the threshold, drank in the words of the reverend gentleman with a kind of religious fervour. The Reverend Jaquemin Hérode continued his discourse. He was, as we said before, a good man at the bottom; and, however much he might dissent with Mess. Lethierry's views, he had come, in all sincerity, to offer him all the aid, both spiritual and temporal, that lay in his power. If, then, Mess. Lethierry was so utterly ruined that he could not hope to put into speculations, either Russian or American, with any hope of success, would he like to take a salaried post under Government? There were excellent ones to be had, and the reverend gentleman was quite ready to exert his influence on Mess. Lethierry's behalf. The post of deputy-sheriff was vacant in Jersey. Mess. Lethierry was much respected and esteemed, and the Reverend Hérode, as Dean of Guernsey, would do all that he could to obtain the office for him. The deputy-sheriff holds a very important position. As the representative of His Majesty, he assists at the sessions, and is present at all judicial executions.

Lethierry fixed his eyes on Doctor Hérode.

"I don't like hanging," said he.

"Mess. Lethierry, the punishment of death is a Divine ordinance. Heaven has placed the sword of justice in the hand of man. Is it not written, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth?'"

The Reverend Ebenezer drew his chair imperceptibly closer to the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, and whispered, so as only to be heard by him, "What this man says is dictated to him."

"By whom—by what?" asked the Reverend Jaquemin, in the same tone.

Ebenezer replied in a very low voice, "By his conscience."

The Reverend Hérode felt in his pocket and drew out a small, thick volume, with clasps, and, placing it on the table, said, in a loud voice,

"Here is conscience."

It was the Bible.

Then Doctor Hérode spoke in softer accents. His sole desire was to be of service to Mess. Lethierry, whom he greatly respected; it was his duty, as his spiritual pastor, to direct and advise him, but, of course, Mess. Lethierry was at perfect liberty to follow his own opinions.

But Mess. Lethierry relapsed into his former state of stupor, and listened to him no longer. Déruchette, sitting beside him, mute and melancholy, did not raise her eyes, and contributed, by her silence, to render this rather one-sided conversation more embarrassing. A silent witness is a heavy drag; but Doctor Hérode did not seem to feel this.

As Lethierry made no reply, Doctor Hérode allowed his eloquence to carry him away. Counsel comes from man; inspiration from Heaven. The counsel of the priest is a kind of inspiration. It is well to accept it, and dangerous to reject it. Sochoh was carried off by eleven devils for having despised the advice of Nathanael. Tibuerinus was struck with leprosy for having expelled the Apostle Andrew from his house. Barjesus, in spite of his powers of magic, was struck blind for having derided Paul. Elxai and his sisters Martha and Martena, are in Hell to this day for having despised the words of Valencianus, who proved to them clearly that their Jesus Christ, thirty-eight leagues in height, was a devil. Oolibamah, who was also called Judith, listened to advice. Rueben and Pheniel obeyed Divine inspiration, as their names will indicate, Reuben, signifying the *son of the dream*, and Pheniel *the face of God*.

Mess. Lethierry struck his fist violently on the table.

"Parbleu!" cried he, "it was all my fault."

"What do you mean?" asked the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode.

"I say that it was all my fault."

"Your fault! What was your fault?"

"Making the Durando return on a Friday."

Mons. Jaquemin Hérode murmured in the ear of the Rev. Ebenezzer Caudray, "The man is superstitious." Then, raising his voice, he said, in a tone in which instruction was blended with severity,

"Mess. Lethierry, it is childish to believe in such things. You must put no faith in such fables. Friday is a day like any other day, and is very often a most fortunate one. Melendez laid the first stone of Saint Augustin on a Friday. It was on a Friday that Henry VII. gave his commission to Sebastian Cabot. The pilgrims of the *Mayflower* landed at Province Town on a Friday. Washington was born on Friday, the 22nd of February, 1732. Christopher Columbus discovered America on Friday, the 12th of October, 1492."

Having said this, he got up.

Ebenezzer, whom he had brought with him, did the same.

Grace and Douce, guessing that the reverend gentlemen were about to take their leave, threw the door wide open.

Mess. Lethierry no longer saw or heard anything. Seeing this, the Rev. Jaquemin Hérode said aside to the Rev. Ebenezzer Candray: "He does not even bow to us; this is not grief, it is stupor. I almost believe that he is going mad." He took the little Bible from the table, and held it carefully in his outstretched hands, like a bird that he was afraid would take wing. This attitude drew the attention of those present. Grace and Douce bent eagerly forward.

He spoke in his most commanding voice—

"Mess. Lethierry, do not let us separate without reading a few pages from the sacred volume. Every situation in life can be illuminated by works; the heathen had their *sortes virgilianæ*, and true believers their Biblical warnings. Open any book at hazard, and it gives advice; open a Bible, and it furnishes a revelation. This is especially good for those in misfortune. We find in the Holy Scripture words that will soothe every trouble. We must consult the holy book at hazard, and read with trust the passage presented to us. What man does not select, God selects for him. Heaven knows what is best for us. His finger, invisible to us, points out the passage upon which our eyes light. Whatever the page may be it will inevitably afford us information. Let us seek for no other, but remain satisfied with what we find. It is a message from on high. Our future is mysteriously shadowed before us in the text that we read with respect and confidence. Mess. Lethierry, you are in affliction, this is the book of consolation; your soul is in suffering, this is the book that will bring it health."

The Rev. Jaquemin Hérode undid the clasps, glided his finger between the leaves, placed his hand for a moment upon the open book, collected his thoughts, then, casting his eyes upon the pages, he read out in an impressive voice, full of authority, these words:

"Isaac walked along the road that leads to the well, called the well of him who lives and sees."

"And Rebecca saw Isaac, and said, Who is this man who is coming towards me?"

"Then Isaac brought her to his tent, and took her for his wife, and the love that he had for her was great."

The eyes of Ebenezzer and Déruchette met.

## SECOND PART.

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### BOOK I.

### *THE ROCK.*

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### A PLACE DIFFICULT TO REACH AND HARDER TO QUIT.

THE boat which had been seen at so many different points on the coast of Guernsey, at various hours of the evening, was, as the reader has no doubt guessed, that of Gilliatt, who had chosen the more dangerous channel through the reefs and rocks which surround the island, because it was the more direct. To reach the wished-for haven in the shortest possible time had been his sole thought. Wrecks will wait for no one; the sea is not to be trifled with, and an hour's delay may be the cause of irreparable mischief. He was all anxiety to fly to the aid of the engine which was in such extreme peril. One of Gilliatt's objects in leaving Guernsey was to avoid attracting attention. He crept off as if he was a prisoner making his escape, and appeared to be doing all he could to conceal his movements. He avoided the coast, as though he wished to shun the eyes of the people of Saint Sampson and Saint Pierre Port, and glided silently close to the opposite shore, which is thinly inhabited. In the breakers he was compelled to take to his oars, but he was well skilled in their use, dipping them in without a splash, and bringing them out again quickly, so that there was comparatively little noise. To witness his cautious proceedings you would have imagined that he was on his way to commit some crime.

The truth was that, having thrown himself headlong, as he had done, into an enterprise which bordered closely on the impossible, and risking his life, as he was about to do, with almost every chance against him, he dreaded anyone else volunteering to assist him.

As the day commenced to break, those hidden eyes which, per-

chance, survey the globe from the Realms of Space might have descried, in the midst of the sea, in one of its most dangerous and threatening localities, two objects, the distance between which was being slowly lessened. The one, almost concealed by the rolling billows, was a sailing boat, and in this boat was a man. It was Gilliatt in the boat that he had won on the day of the regatta. The other object—motionless, sombre and colossal—had a strange aspect, as it appeared to rise from the bosom of the sea. These two lofty pillars springing from the ocean had between them something like a huge beam. From a distance it was impossible to imagine what this object could be—all that could be discerned was that it formed a kind of bridge between the two pillars. The whole looked like a gigantic gateway. But what is the use of a gateway in the boundless ocean, which is open to all? It looked like some titanic cromlech planted in mid-ocean by some powerful fantasy, and built by hands that are accustomed to turn out work proportionate to the site that has been selected for it. Its wild and rugged outline stood out distinctly against the clear sky. Gradually, the east became bright with the light of day, and the whiteness of the horizon served to deepen the gloomy tints of the sea. In the opposite sky the moon was fading away. These two lofty objects were the Douvres Rocks, and the enormous object clasped tightly between them, like an architrave between two lintels, was the Durande.

The rock held its prey fast, and, as it seemed to exhibit it with an air of triumph, was a frightful object to contemplate. Sometimes inanimate objects appear to assume an air of gloomy hostility towards mankind. There was something of this in the appearance of these rocks. They seemed to be waiting for something more.

No scene could more plainly display the pride and arrogance of nature than this. Here was the conquered vessel; there the triumphant rocks. They stood up, still dripping from the effects of the tempest of the day before, like combatants perspiring after a violent struggle. The wind had lulled and the sea rippled peacefully; on the surface of the waters the presence of breakers might be detected here and there from the graceful curves of foam which showed their whereabouts. A low, soft murmur came from the horizon, like the murmur of many bees. All around was smooth and level, with the exception of the two Douvres, standing erect, like two black pillars.

Up to a certain height they were covered with sea-weed, whilst, above that, they shone as though clothed in armour of polished steel. They appeared ready again to commence the

strife. You could at once see that their roots were deep in the bed of the ocean. The sea has its mountains as well as the land. You felt a sense of a tragic power that they possessed, as you gazed upon them. In general, the sea sedulously conceals her enemies. She would willingly keep them hidden. Her unmeasurable depths retain her secrets well. It is a rare occurrence for her mysteries to be revealed. We know that she is cruel, but we do not know the extent of her deeds. She is open, and secret at the same time, and keeps her crimes carefully hidden away. She wrecks a vessel and hides it away, and, covering it with her waters, seems ashamed of her guilt.

The wave is full of deceit; she slays, she robs, she conceals her plunder, affects ignorance of her crimes, and smiles.

She roars like a wild beast at one moment, and at the next bleats like a sheep.

But here there was nothing of this. The Douvres, towering high above the waves, raised in their clutches the shattered wreck of the Durande with an air of triumph. It seemed as though two monstrous arms emerging from the sea were showing to the storm the carcass of a ship, like a murderer who boasts of his crime.

There was a certain air of majestic terror in the hour, which contributed to make the scene more impressive. The dawn has a strange, mysterious grandeur of its own, which is composed of the conclusion of a dream and the commencement of a thought. At this confused movement there is something spectral in the juncture of the two.

The enormous forms of the two Douvres appeared like a vast letter H, having the Durande for the cross stroke, and standing out bold and distinct against the horizon, in all their twilight majesty.

Gilliatt had on his sea-going dress—woollen shirt, woollen stockings, hobnailed shoes, a knitted jacket, trousers with pockets in them, made of some thick stuff, and on his head he wore a red woollen cap, much in vogue amongst mariners, and known in the last century as a *galerienne*.

He recognised the rocks at a glance, and made for them.

The Durande was in a position exactly contrary to that of a vessel which had gone to the bottom, for she was a vessel hung up in the air.

Never had there been a salvage which presented greater difficulties. It was broad daylight when Gilliatt arrived in the water at the foot of the rocks.

As we before said, there was but little sea on. The sea had



only that amount of movement which is caused by its being imprisoned between opposite rocks. Channels, whether broad or narrow, have always got a certain amount of swell-on in them, and the interior of a narrow passage has always foaming breakers in it.

Gilliatt took every precaution in approaching the Douvres. He took soundings continually. Gilliatt had several things that he wished to disembark.

Accustomed to frequent and prolonged absences from home, he always had everything ready, so that he might be able to start whenever the fancy seized him. There was a sack of biscuit, another of rye-meal, a basket of salt fish and smoked beef, and a large can of fresh water. There was a Norway chest, painted with flowers, holding some coarse woollen shirts, his oilskins, and his waterproof overalls, and a sheepskin, which, at night, he wore over his jersey. He had, on leaving the *Bû de la Rue*, hastily put all these articles into his boat, together with some loaves of fresh bread. In the hurry of departure he had brought no tools except his heavy sledge-hammer, his axe, his hatchet, a saw, and a knotted cord with a grappling-hook at the end of it. With a ladder of this kind, with the use of which he was thoroughly well acquainted, the steepest precipices became easily accessible, and a good climber can ascend the most precipitous rocks. On the island of Sark may be seen the manner in which the fishermen of the harbour of Gosselin can use the knotted cord. His nets, and hooks, and lines—in short, all his fishing implements—were in the boat. He had placed them there almost mechanically, and following his usual custom; for, as he was going, should he decide to carry out his enterprise, to remain for a time in a region of rocks and breakers, fishing-tackle would be of but little use to him. When Gilliatt reached the reef the tide was going out, which was a favourable circumstance for him. The receding waves left bare, at the foot of the little Douvres, several table-rocks—some perfectly flat, and others slightly sloping, and looking something like the corbels that support a ceiling. These table-rocks—some of which were broad, and others narrow—stood at unequal distances at the side of the perpendicular monolith, and ended in a narrow shelf just underneath the wreck of the *Durande*, the hull of which was jammed between the two rocks. She was grasped as tightly as though in a vice. These platforms were exceedingly handy for disembarking goods upon, or for taking a survey from, and the cargo of the boat might be landed there

as a temporary measure; but this would have to be done quickly, as they were only above water for a few hours. At high tide they would be covered with a foaming sea.

It was alongside these rocks—some flat, and some at an incline—that Gilliatt brought his boat. They were covered by a thick, slippery coating of seaweed, and their sloping surfaces, in some cases, increased the danger of those stepping upon them.

Gilliatt pulled off his shoes and stockings, and, springing barefooted upon the treacherous weed, made fast his boat to a point of the rock.

Then he advanced as he could along the narrow granite shelf, until he got under the *Durande*, and then, raising his eyes, took stock of her position. The *Durande* had been caught up, suspended, and, as it were, fixed between two rocks, at a height of about twenty feet above the waves. It must have been a wave of unusual power that had hurled her into such a position.

The extraordinary power of the waves surprise no one who is acquainted with the sea. To quote only one instance: On the 25th of January, 1840, in the Gulf of Stora, almost at the conclusion of a storm, one of the last waves struck a brig, and, casting it entirely over the wreck of the corvette *La Marné*, fixed it immovably, bowsprit first, between two cliffs.

But in the *Douvres* there was only half of the *Durande*. The ship, snatched up from the waters, had in some way been torn from them by the hurricane; the power of the whirlwind had pulled it one way, and the force of the waves the other, and between these two opposing elements she had been snapped like a lath. The afterpart, with the engine and the paddle-wheels, had been torn out of the foam, and, by the intense violence of the cyclone, driven into the passage between the *Douvres*, where she had penetrated as far as her midship beam, and had stuck fast there. The gust had been well directed; to force it into this position the hurricane must have struck it like a mace. The forepart, carried away by the wind, had fallen into the sea, and was beaten to pieces amongst the breakers. The hold, which had been stove in, had cast the bodies of the drowned bullocks into the sea. A large portion of the forward planking and bulwarks was still hanging to the stanchions of the port paddle-box and to some of the braces, which could easily be severed by a blow of a hatchet.

Here and there, amongst the sharp and rugged portions of the reef, beams, planks, fragments of sails, pieces of chain, and every kind of wreckage could be seen lying about on all sides.

Gilliatt examined the wreck of the *Durande* with the greatest interest. The keel formed a roof over his head.

The sky over the vast waste of waters, which hardly stirred, was calm and serene, and the sun shone proudly from the midst of that vast circle of blue.

Every now and then a drop of water detached itself from the wreck and fell into the sea.

## CHAPTER II.

### A COMPLETE WRECK.

THE Douvres differed in shape as well as in height from each other. On the Little Douvre, which was curved and pointed, long veins, of a red hue, ran from the top to the bottom, of a rather softer quality than the remainder of the rock, which divided the granite into irregular partitions. At the points of division were several fractures and irregularities which would afford a hold to those desirous of scaling the rock. One of these fractures had become so much worn and hollowed by the action of the waves that it had been formed into a sort of natural niche, in which a statue could have been placed. The stone of which the Little Douvre was composed was rounded and polished, and felt like touchstone; but this in no way deteriorated from its lasting qualities. The Little Douvre terminated in a point like a horn. The Great Douvre was polished, regular, and perpendicular, and seemed as if it had been squared by a stonemason. It was in one piece, and appeared cut out of black ivory. There was not a hole or crevice in it. Its precipitous sides had an inhospitable look. A convict could not have used it as a means of escape, nor a bird for a place upon which to build its nest. It had a flat top, like the Man-Rock, but the summit of the Great Douvre was inaccessible. It was possible to climb up the Little Douvre, but not to remain there; whilst it would have been easy to rest on the summit of the Great Douvre, if it had only been possible to reach it.

Gilliatt, having taken in, at a rapid glance, the position of affairs, returned to his boat, and disembarked the cargo upon one of the largest of the shelves of rock; tied it up tightly in a sort of waterproof bale, and adjusted a sling tackle and block to it, then thrust it into an aperture of the rocks, where the sea

could not reach it, and, forcing his fingers and toes into the cavities of the Little Douvre, he clambered up to where the Durande was suspended in mid-air. When he arrived on a level with the paddle-boxes, he sprang upon the bridge. Seen from the interior, the wreck presented a melancholy aspect. The Durande exhibited all the traces of a terrible struggle. The frightful violence of the tempest was plainly visible. The storm had treated the vessel like a band of wreckers. Nothing more resembles the victim of an attempted outrage than a shipwrecked vessel. The clouds, the thunder, the rain, the wind, the waves, and the rocks, form a terrible band of accomplices. As you stood upon the dismantled decks, it seemed as though you could see the cruel traces left by the feet of the storm-fiend. Everywhere were the marks of his fury. The strange manner in which certain portions of the ironwork had been twisted showed the terrible force of the waves. Below, the cell of a furious madman, in which everything has been broken, could alone give an idea of the scene of ruin and devastation. No wild beast rends its prey in so furious a manner as the ocean. The sea has numerous talons; the wind bites, the waves devour, and the billows, like a powerful jaw, rend and tear. The stroke of ocean is like the blow of a lion's paw. The breaking-up of the Durande offered the peculiarity of being detailed and minute. It seemed as if the ship had been picked to pieces in a terrible manner. Much of it appeared to have been done on purpose. As you gazed upon it you felt inclined to exclaim, "What uncalled for mischief!" The edges of the planking had been serrated as though with a saw. This kind of destruction is peculiar to the cyclone; to chip and rend away is the natural hobby of this mighty destroyer. He acts like a sworn tormentor; the disasters that he causes resemble the ingenious tortures of bygone ages. You might almost say that his doings were actuated by a spirit of hostility. He has refinements in his cruelty, like an Indian. Whilst he is slaying his victim he tears it away bit by bit; he tortures the wreck, revenges himself upon it, and amuses himself with petty acts of cruelty. Cyclones are rare in these regions, and the more to be dreaded because they are unexpected. A rock, in the course of a severe storm, may cause it to revolve upon it like a pivot, and there is but little reason to doubt that the tempest had swept round the Douvres, and formed the waves into a water-spout when it came into collision with the rocks; this would account for the vessel's being flung up in

its lofty position ; though, in its rage, the wind takes no more account of a ship than a sling does of a stone. The *Durande* had the appearance of a man cut in two ; it was a trunk severed in twain, from which hung a mass of cordage and broken fragments, resembling the pendent entrails. What was not entirely smashed was torn from its place. Pieces of the sheathing resembled currycombs, so bristling were they with nails. Ruin was there in every aspect ; a marling - spike had turned into a mere mass of iron ; a lead was nothing but a flattened piece of metal ; a dead-eye, a mere fragment of wood ; a halyard, a piece of broken rope. All was wreck, ruin, and devastation on every side. There was nothing that was not unhooked or unnailed, cracked, clipped, thrown out of place, pierced with holes, and destroyed. Nothing in that terrible mass of confusion clung together ; all was dislocated and shattered. There was that air of confusion and destruction, hideous to behold, which is always visible when a struggle has taken place, whether it be between men—when we call it war, or between the elements—when we term it chaos. All was crumbling away ; everything was ready to sink to the bottom ; an enormous and confused mass of planking, panelling, ironwork, cordage, and beams, had been caught at the very edge of the spot where the vessel had broken in half, and from whence the slightest shock might precipitate it into the sea. All that remained of this vessel, which had had so triumphant a career—all this mass of wreckage which was suspended between the two *Douvres*—was cracked and broken, and through the shattered apertures permitted the dark interior of the vessel to be seen. The ocean spat its foam in derision upon the ruin wrought by itself.

### CHAPTER III.

#### SOUND, BUT NOT SAFE.

GILLIATT had not expected to have found only half of the vessel. Nothing in the report—in other respects so precise—which had been given by the commander of the *Shealtiel* had prepared him for the *Durande's* having parted in the centre. It was probable that the “diabolical crash” heard by the captain of the *Shealtiel* was the moment when she had parted amidships under the blow of a tremendous sea. He had no doubt left as the last gust of

wind struck her, and what he had imagined to have been a wave was a water-spout. When he went nearer, later on, he had only been able to see the forepart of the vessel: the rest—that is to say, the huge fracture which had divided it in two—was concealed from him by the turn of the rocks. In reality, the captain of the *Shealtiel* had only stated the facts: the hull was utterly lost, but the engines were intact. Similar chances are frequent in shipwrecks, as in conflagrations; the logic of disaster is beyond the range of our reasoning powers. The broken masts had gone by the board. The funnel was not even bent. The great mass of iron-plating which surrounded the machinery had kept it all together, and in one piece. Some of the rivets in the planking of the paddle-boxes were gone, and apertures showed, as you see in broken Venetian blinds, but through these the floats could be seen in fairly good order—only a few were missing. In addition to the engine, the great capstan in the stern had resisted the force of the elements; its chain was still there, and, thanks to the firmness and solidity of its fixings, it could still be made use of, unless the strain of the bars should tear up the planking.

The deck was in a very bad condition, and bent and shook with the least weight. But, in opposition to this, the hull of the vessel, which was tightly fixed between the Douvres, seemed firm and solid. This preservation of the engines had something ludicrous about it, and added to the irony of the catastrophe. The gloomy malice of the unknown indulges itself sometimes in these bitter mockeries. The engines were saved, but this did not prevent them from being utterly useless. The sea seemed only to have preserved them in order to destroy them at its leisure. It had kept them for a plaything, as a cat does a mouse. She was going to torture it, to tear it piecemeal, and to yield it up to the cruelties of the foaming wave. It was to decrease day by day, and slowly melt away. For what could be done with this massive block of machinery and mechanism, at once so powerful and yet so delicate? Condemned from its mere weight to remain immovable, delivered up in this solitude to the forces of destruction, and exposed in the grasp of the rock to the cruel will of the wind and the wave. That it could ever escape from its terrible position, or be freed from the implacable destruction that hung over it, seemed the height of madness to contemplate for an instant.

The *Durande* was the captive of the Douvres.

How was she to be released ?

How could she be extricated ?

To plan the escape of a man is difficult enough ; how much harder to solve the riddle of releasing a ponderous and massive piece of machinery ?

## CHAPTER IV.

### A PRELIMINARY SURVEY.

ON every side was urgent work for Gilliatt to do. The first and most important thing, however, was for him to find secure moorings for his boat, and a place of shelter for himself. The *Durande* had got a list to starboard, so that the right paddle-box was higher than the left one. Gilliatt clambered on to the one on the right. From this point, which commanded a view of the network of shoals and rocks, which extended in lines and angles round the *Douvres*, he was able to study the ground-plan of the reef.

This survey was the commencement of his work.

The *Douvres*, as we have already said, were two tall shafts, forming the entrance to a narrow passage between granite cliffs, with perpendicular peaks. In submarine formations it is not uncommon to come across these angular corridors, which seem to have been cut out with an axe. This winding passage had always water in it, even at low tide. A strong and rapid current ran through it from end to end. The sharpness of its turnings acted on the waters that flowed through it according to the quarter from which the wind blew ; sometimes it broke the swell and caused it to fall, at others it lashed it into fury ; but the latter was the most frequent result. Any opposition rouses the ocean into rage, and drives it to madness. Foam is the irritation of the wave.

The stormy winds are cabined and confined in the same manner between these winding passages, and chafe and fret in a similar way. The tempest makes every effort to escape from its restraint. Its power is still immense, but it is compressed and, as it were, driven to a point. It is a mace and a dart in one, and pierces at the same time that it stuns. A draught through a crevice is a hurricane at the *Douvres* in miniature. The two chains of rocks which compose this kind of street in the sea

form gradually-decreasing stages in the ocean, until at some distance they disappear entirely beneath the water.

There was another inlet, but not so high as the one between the Douvres, and much narrower, which formed the entrance to the defile in the east. It could easily be assumed that this double prolongation of these ridges of rocks was continued under the sea as far as the Man-Rock, which towered up like a square turret at the other extremity of the reef. At low tide—which was the time at which Gilliatt was taking his observations—the peaks of these submarine ranges just showed above the surface of the water, preserving their parallel lines without interruption. The “Man” bounded and buttressed the entire group of reefs on the eastern side; whilst on the other it was protected by the two Douvres.

From a bird's-eye view, the whole reef formed a winding circlet of breakers, having the Douvres at one end and the “Man” at the other.

The rocks of Douvres, taking them all in all, are nothing else than two gigantic granite pillars, the crests of which almost touch, rising up vertically and forming the peaks of one of those mountain ranges which run below the ocean. These enormous exfoliations are only found rising from great depths. The surf and the tempest had jagged its crest, until it looked like a saw. Only the summit of the peak was visible, and this formed the rock. The portion that was concealed beneath the waves must have been of gigantic proportions. The passage into which the tempest had hurled the *Durande* was between these two colossal pillars.

This passage, which was as crooked as the forked lightning, was of nearly the same breadth in all parts. The wash of the sea had made it so. The ceaseless motion of the ocean sometimes produces these strange regularities.

The wave has a geometry of its own.

From one end of the passage to the other, the walls run parallel at a distance which the breadth of beam of the *Durande* fitted exactly. The curving back of the Little Douvre had left a space for the paddle-boxes; had it not been for this they must have been crushed to atoms. The parallel faces of the rock in the interior of the passage, were hideous to contemplate. When, in exploring that dreary waste called the ocean, we arrive at the unknown world of the sea all becomes wild and wonderful.

As Gilliatt gazed down the passage from his position on the deck, he was filled with horror at the sight that was presented



to his eyes. In the granite passes of the ocean we often find a permanent representation of wreck and ruin. The gorge of the Douvres had all these frightful characteristics. The oxydes formed by the chemical action of the air upon the rock, spotted its face here and there with crimson stains, looking like clotted blood, and resembling the sanguinary exudations on the walls of a slaughter-house. There was an air of the sepulchre about the place. The rough marine stone, tinted here by the decompositions of metallic amalgams mingling with the rock, and there by continued damp, exhibited, in one place, hideous purple stains; in another, slimy, green blotches, and, in a third, crimson patches, causing the mind to dwell upon ideas of murder and extermination. It looked like a room in which a murder had been committed, and in which no efforts had been made to cleanse the damning evidences of the crime; or it might have been imagined that men had been crushed to death there, leaving the hideous imprints of their fate upon the walls. The sharply-peaked rocks had the appearance of having witnessed whole centuries of accumulated agonies. In certain spots the blood seemed to be still oozing out, and the whole wall appeared to be dripping with it—so much so that a finger placed upon it would inevitably be withdrawn stained and befouled with gore. Murder and massacre seemed to have set their seals upon the place. At the foot of the parallel precipices, on a level with the rolling tide, which sometimes buried them beneath its foam, or contemptuously left them dry, were enormous rounded heaps of shingle—red, black, and violet—which looked like the entrails of some human body; and you could almost imagine that you saw lungs, hearts, and livers scattered about and putrifying. Giants might have been disembowelled there. Long red lines ran from the top to the bottom of the rock, resembling the oozings from the bier of a murdered man. Such hideous aspects are frequent in the caverns of ocean.

## CHAPTER V.

### A FEW WORDS ON THE SECRET CO-OPERATION OF THE ELEMENTS.

FOR those who, by the unfortunate hazards of a voyage, may be condemned to take up their residence for a time upon a reef in the midst of the ocean, the shape of that reef is a thing to be by

no means lightly considered. There is the rock, in the shape of a pyramid, with its single peak rising from the sea ; there is the circular rock, somewhat resembling a round enclosure of stones, and the corridor rock. This last is the most dangerous of all, not only on account of the ceaseless whirl and bubble of waters between its walls, and the hideous din of the imprisoned waves, but on account of certain obscure meteorological properties which seem to appertain to the parallelism of two rocks in the open sea, and which convert them into an electric battery. The result is an immediate action upon both air and water. The corridor rock acts upon the wave and upon the wind—mechanically by its shape, and galvanically by the different magnetic actions produced by its vertical height, and its masses placed in juxtaposition and opposition to each other. The nature of the corridor rock is to draw to itself all the various powers of the hurricane, and it has, in all storms, a singular power of concentration. Hence, in that portion of the sea where breakers abound, there is a certain accentuation of tempests. It must be remembered that the wind is composite. It is often believed that the wind is composed of very simple elements. This is a mistake. Its force is not only dynamic, but also chemical ; not only is it chemical, but it is magnetic. Its effects frequently remain inexplicable. The wind is as much electrical as aerial. Certain winds coincide with the Aurora Borealis. The wind, blowing across the banks of the Aiguilles, raises up waves one hundred feet high, to the extreme surprise of Dumon d'Urville, who writes: "The corvette did not know what power to obey." In the southern seas the ocean swells up as if it were attacked with an outbreak of vast tumours, and presents so terrible an appearance that the savages fly inland to escape the sight of it. The blasts from the north are different, being mingled with thin particles of ice, and their gusts, which cannot be inhaled by human beings, frequently blow over the sledges of the Esquimaux. Other winds burn. The Simoon of Africa is the Typhoon of China and Samiel of India. Simoon, Typhoon, and Samiel sound like the names of demons. They pour down from the summits of the mountains. A storm once vitrified the Volcano of Toluca. This burning blast, which is a dark-coloured whirlwind, rushing through a mass of scarlet cloud, has been alluded to in the Vedās, "Behold the Black God, who comes to steal the red cross!" One finds in all these facts the influence of the electric mystery. The wind itself abounds in this mystery ; so does the sea. The ocean, too, has many component parts ;

under the upper waves, which we see, are its waves of force, which are invisible. Many parts go to compose its whole. Of all made-up elements, ocean is the most indivisible and the most profound. Endeavour to imagine this chaos, so enormous, that it brings all things to one level. It is the universal receiver—the reservoir for all the germs of existence, and the mould for its transformations. It amasses, and then scatters; it accumulates, and sows; it devours, and creates; it receives all the drainage of the earth, and changes it into treasure. It is solid in the iceberg, liquid in the wave, and fluid in the effluvia. Regarded as matter, it is mass; regarded as force, it is abstraction. It equalises and joins all phenomena. It simplifies by the infinity of its combinations. By dint of movement and change, it arrives at transparency. Soluble deficiencies are united in its bosom. It has so many elements that it has a share in almost everything. One of its drops is as complete as a sea itself. It gains a just balance by the violence of its storms. Plato saw the spheres dance. The fact is a strange one, though not the less a real one {but the ocean, in the vast terrestrial revolution round the sun, becomes the balance which regulates the movement of the globe.} In the phenomena of the sea, the phenomena of all the other elements are represented. The sea is blown from the whirlwind like water through a syphon; a storm works like a pump; (the lightning issues alike from sea and air.) On board ship, severe shocks are often felt, and an odour of sulphur issues from the cable tier.

The ocean boils.

“The Devil has put the sea into his cauldron,” remarked Admiral Ruyter. In certain tempests, which take place at the equinox, and show the rebalancement of Nature’s powers of fecundity, vessels as they cut through the foam generate a certain luminous effect, and phosphoric sparks dot the rigging so closely that the sailors stretch out their hands and endeavour to catch these birds of fire. After the earthquake of Lisbon a gust of hot air, like a blast from the mouth of a furnace, hurled upon the city a wave sixty feet high. The oscillation of the ocean is akin to the convulsions of the earth.

These unlimited powers produce occasionally all kinds of cataclysms. (At the end of the year 1864, one of the Maldivé Islands, some hundred leagues from the Malabar Coast, actually sunk in the sea.) It went to the bottom, the same as a ship might have done. The fishermen, who had left it in the morning, on their return could find no traces of it, and could only catch a faint

glimpse of their villages below the surface of the sea. This time the wrecks of houses were witnessed from boats.

In Europe, where it seems that Nature feels itself restrained by civilisation, such events were so rare as to be looked upon as impossible. Nevertheless, Jersey and Guernsey originally formed part of Gaul. Even, however, at the time at which we write, an equinoctial gale has destroyed, between England and Scotland, a large portion of the cliff of the Firth of Forth.

(In no portion of the world do these dangerous forces appear more terribly united than in the northern strait called the Lyse-Fjord.) The Lyse-Fjord has some of the most dangerous sunken rocks to be found in any part of the sea. There the demonstration is complete. It is in the sea of Norway, in the neighbourhood of the inhospitable Gulf of Stavanger, in the fifty-ninth degree of latitude. The water is thick and black, and subject to intermittent storms. (In this sea, in the very middle of this solitary waste of waters, is a passage between the lofty rocks—a street never trodden by human footsteps.) No one passes through it. No ship ever ventures within its gloomy portals. It is a passage ten leagues in length, bounded by rocky walls three thousand feet in height. Such is the spot which offers an entrance to the sea. This strait has its turns and angles, like all similar streets of the ocean, which are never straight, on account of the rush of the waves. In the Lyse-Fjord the sea is almost always calm, and the heavens above serene, but, for all that, the spot is a terrible one.

Where is the wind ?

Not on high.

Where is the thunder ?

Not in the clouds.

The wind is beneath the wave ; the lightnings within the rocks. Every now and then the water heaves convulsively, and at certain moments, when there is not a cloud in the sky, half-way up the perpendicular cliffs, some fifteen hundred feet above the waves, and more on the southern than the northern side, the rock suddenly thunders, and the lightning darts out, and then recedes again, like those toys which spring out and then draw back, which we see in the hands of children. They contract and enlarge, strike the opposite cliff, return to the rock, then issue out again, burst forth once more in a thousand multiplied heads and tongues of flame, strike where they can, and then mysteriously disappear. Flocks of birds take to flight, screaming wildly in their terror. Nothing can be more unaccountable

than this artillery of heaven, issuing from an invisible source. Cliff attacks another cliff, and each rock endeavours to destroy the other. This is not a war in which man has any concern; it is a long-standing hatred of two cliffs in the same gulf. In the Lyse-Fjord the wind whirls up the waves.

The rock performs the part of the thunder, and the lightning bursts forth as though from a volcano. This strange spot is an electric pile, which has for its plates the parallel lines of cliffs.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A STABLE FOR THE HORSE.

GILLIATT was sufficiently familiar with reefs and rocks to treat the Douvres as a matter deserving consideration. As we said before, his first business was to find a place of security for his boat. There was a double row of reefs which stretched in a winding form behind the Douvres, connected here and there with other rocks which suggested passages without any exit, and cavities opening into the main central avenue, like branches upon the trunk of a tree. The lower portion of the rocks were covered with seaweed, and the upper portion with lichen. The regular line of seaweed showed the high-water mark, and the limit of the sea when the weather was calm. The portions which the water did not reach had that golden and silvery appearance which is produced upon marine granite by the mixture of the white and yellow lichen.

An enormous quantity of cone-shaped shells covered the rocks in certain places—the dry rot of the granite.

In other spots, in the angles which ran back into the rock, and where fine sand had collected, which was ribbed rather by the wind than by the wave, there were groups of blue thistles. In those spots which were swept but little by the foam could be noticed the tiny dens made by the sea-urchins. This shell, covered with prickles, which moves about like a living ball, by rolling upon its points, and whose cuirass is composed of more than ten thousand separate pieces, artistically arranged and welded together, the sea-urchin, which is generally called, for some unknown reason, *Aristotle's Lantern*, hollows out the granite with its fine teeth, which have the power to penetrate the rock and takes possession of the cavity. It is in these cells that the

gatherers of the produce of the sea find them. They eat them in quarters and eat them raw, like an oyster. Some dip their bread in the soft flesh; hence their other name of *sea-egg*. The distant summits of the more remote reefs, which had been left bare as the tide went out, were close under the precipitous sides of the Man-Rock, and formed a small creek, which was almost entirely enclosed by rocky walls. Here was a place in which it might be possible to moor the boat. It was the shape of a horse-shoe, and was exposed to the east wind on one side only, which is the mildest of all winds in these seas. The water which was enclosed by the reefs was generally calm. The bay seemed a suitable one; besides, Gilliatt had not much room for choice. If he wished to profit by the low tide he must lose no time.

The weather still kept fine and calm, and the insolent sea yet retained its good humour.

Gilliatt descended from the wreck, put on his shoes, unmoored his boat, and, pushing off, pulled round to the other side of the rock.

Having reached the Man-Rock, he examined the entrance to the little creek. A line in the ripple of the wave—a line which would have been imperceptible to any but a sailor's eye—showed him the entrance to the channel.

Gilliatt gazed attentively upon this line, which could faintly be seen beneath the wave. He held off a little, in order to gain plenty of room to enable him to hit off the channel safely, and then, with a few strokes of the oars, he entered the little bay.

He took soundings.

The bottom seemed good.

The boat would be fairly secure against anything that might happen at that season.

The most dangerous reefs have frequently some sheltered spot like this. The refuge offered by these shoals are like the hospitality of the Arab—safe and sure.

Gilliatt anchored his boat as near as he could to the "Man," but still far enough off to prevent its grinding against the rocks.

This task completed, he crossed his arms, and took counsel as to what he should do next.

The boat was secure, and so the first problem was solved; but a second one presented itself: Where could he find shelter for himself?

Two places crossed his mind: his boat, the little cabin of which would hardly contain him; or, the summit of the Man Rock, which was easy to ascend. Should he decide upon either

of these, it was possible, at low water, by leaping from rock to rock, to gain, almost dry-shod, the passage between the Douvres, where the *Durande* was.

But low-water only lasts for a comparatively short time, and for the remainder of the day he would be separated, either from his resting place or the wreck, by a space of nearly two hundred fathoms. To swim through the breakers is always difficult, but if the sea is at all rough it becomes almost impossible.

He felt that both his boat and the "Man" must be given up as places of shelter.

It was impossible to find a place among the neighbouring rocks.

Twice a day the rising tide flowed over the lower ones, whilst the tops of the more lofty ones were constantly deluged with showers of foam, which would drench him in a most inhospitable manner.

He thought of the wreck.

Could he get shelter there?

Gilliatt hoped so.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A SHELTER FOR THE MAN.

**HALF-AN-HOUR** afterwards Gilliatt had returned to the wreck and had descended from the upper to the lower deck, and from thence to the hold, continuing the examinations which he had commenced on his first visit. He had, with the assistance of the capstan, hauled on board the *Durande* the bale which he had made of the cargo of his boat.

The capstan had behaved well; there was no lack of bars to turn it with; Gilliatt had only to search amongst the wreckage to pick out what he wanted. He had found amongst it a cold chisel, which had, no doubt, fallen from the carpenter's chest, and had at once added it to his small stock of working implements. In addition to this—for in times of scarcity everything counts—he had his knife in his pocket.

Gilliatt worked the whole day at the wreck: clearing away, making secure, and arranging. When evening arrived he had come to this conclusion: That the wreck shook in every gust of wind, and trembled with every step that he took, and that no part

of her was firm and secure, except that portion of the hull containing the engine, which was fixed between the two rocks.

To take up his abode, therefore, in the *Durande* would be most unwise. It would add extra weight to it, and, so far from doing that, it would be advisable to lighten her as much as possible.

To burden the wreck was exactly contrary to the design that he had formed.

The state of ruin that it was in, required to be treated with the greatest care. It was like a sick person in the last stage of a malady. Some day there would be enough wind to make an end of the matter. It was sufficiently disadvantageous to have to labour on it, as the amount of weight that it would have to sustain would very likely put a strain upon it which it was beyond its strength to bear. Besides, should any accident occur when he was asleep on board her, he would naturally sink with the vessel. No assistance could there avail him, and he would be totally lost. In order to be of any service to the wreck he must find some asylum other than on board of her.

How to be outside, and yet near her, was a problem to be solved.

The difficulty seemed to grow greater.

Where could he find a shelter answering to such conditions?

Gilliatt considered.

Nothing remained but the two *Douvres*, and they seemed utterly untenable.

From below, on the summit of the higher *Douvre*, a species of excrecence could be distinguished. High rocks, with a flattened summit like the Great *Douvre* and the "*Man*," are only decapitated peaks, and abound in ranges of mountains and in the ocean. Certain rocks—especially those that are to be met with at sea—have clefts in them, as in trees which have been partially cut down; they seem to have received a blow with an axe. They have, indeed, received a series of blows from the hurricane, which may be termed the wood-cutter of the ocean.

There are other and still more profound causes of these convulsions of nature; hence the many scars on these ancient masses of granite. Some of these monsters have had their heads severed.

Sometimes these heads, without an explanation being possible, do not fall, but remain half-severed upon the mutilated trunk.

This singularity is not rare.

The *Roque au Diable* at Guernsey, and the *Table* in the



valley of Anweiler, offer two of these astounding exhibitions of geological riddles. Something of a similar nature had probably formed the summit of the Great Douvre. If the protuberance which could be perceived upon the summit of the Douvre was not a natural swelling of the stone, it must certainly be some remains of the former summit. Perhaps, even, there might be a hollow in this fragment of rock.

All that Gilliatt asked was some hole in which to hide his head.

But how to reach the summit? How could he scale that perpendicular face of the rock, hard and polished as a flint, half covered with a coating of slimy vegetation, and having the slippery aspect of a well-soaped surface?

The summit was at least thirty feet above the deck of the *Durande*.

Gilliatt took out of his tool-chest his knotted cord, hooked it to his belt by the grappling-iron, and then proceeded to climb the Little Douvre. As he ascended he found it was difficult to make much progress. He had neglected to remove his shoes, which increased his troubles, but, with some exertion, he reached the summit. He then, with some precaution, raised himself into an erect position. There was scarcely a resting-place for his feet, and to make this his lodging would be difficult. A follower of Saint Simon Stylites might have been contented with it, but Gilliatt, more exacting, required something a little better.

The Little Douvre, bending over towards its taller brother, looked, from a distance, as if it were bowing to it; and the space between the two rocks, which, at the bottom, was fully twenty feet, was not more than eight or ten at the top.

From the spot which he had attained Gilliatt saw more distinctly the rocky protuberance which covered a portion of the platform of the Great Douvre.

This platform was at least eighteen feet above his head.

A precipice separated him from it.

The curved side of the Little Douvre sloped away beneath him.

Gilliatt undid the knotted rope from his belt, glanced rapidly at the distance between the rocks, and threw the grapnel on to the platform.

The hook slid along the rock and slipped. The knotted cord, with the grapnel at its end, fell down the whole depth of the Little Douvre.

He hauled it up again, and made another cast; throwing it

further over, and aiming it, as well as he could, at the excrescence, on which he could perceive some cracks and crevices.

The cast was so neat and skilful that the hook took hold.

Gilliatt drew the rope towards him.

The rock gave way, and once more the rope fell, striking the sides of the precipice, at Gilliatt's feet.

Gilliatt threw it for the third time, and the grapnel remained fast.

Gilliatt tried if it was firm ; it resisted his efforts.

The grapnel had taken a good hold.

It had evidently fastened itself into some irregularities in the platform, which were invisible to Gilliatt.

And now he must entrust his life to that unknown anchorage.

Gilliatt did not hesitate for a moment.

Time pressed, and he must go to work the shortest way.

Besides, to descend again to the deck of the *Durande* to plan something else, was almost impossible. A slip would have proved fatal, and it was almost a certainty that this would occur. To mount had been difficult ; to descend would be dangerous.

Gilliatt's movements, like those of all good sailors, were full of decision. He never wasted his strength, and never exerted himself in a manner disproportioned to it ; hence the prodigies of vigour which he executed with only ordinary muscular powers. His biceps were no more than those of other men, but his heart was bolder. He added to strength—which is physical—energy—which is moral.

He was about to essay a dangerous feat.

To cross, with merely the support of this thread, the space between the two *Douvres*—that was what he had to do.

Death often steps forward when acts of devotion and duty are about to be performed, and asks this question :

“ Wilt thou do this ? ” asks the shade.

Once more Gilliatt tested the cord ; the grappling-hook held firm.

He wrapped his left hand in his handkerchief, and grasped the knotted cord in his right, which he protected with his left ; then, stretching out one foot to the front, and striking the other sharply against the rock, so that the vigor of his impetus might prevent the gyration of the rope, he throw himself from the Little *Douvre* against the precipitous face of the great one.

The shock was a tremendous one.

In spite of the precautions that he had taken, the cord twisted, and it was with his shoulder that he first struck the opposite rock.

He rebounded from it.

And now, in their turn, his clenched hands struck against the rocks; the handkerchief had slipped, and they were scratched and torn; a little more and they would have been crushed.

Dizzy and confused, Gilliatt remained for an instant suspended against the face of the rock. He was still sufficiently master of himself not to let go the cord.

The rope oscillated and jerked violently, and it was some time before he could get his feet round it, but at last he succeeded in doing so.

Recovering himself, and grasping the cord as firmly with his feet as with his hands, he gazed into the abyss beneath him.

He had no anxiety about the length of the cord, which had often served him to ascend greater heights. In fact, it hung down to the deck of the *Durande*.

Gilliatt, sure of being able to descend, began to climb, and in a few moments reached the platform.

Never had anything without wings found a footing there before. The platform was covered with the dung of birds. The summit was in the shape of an irregular four-sided figure, formed by the breaking off of the great granite cone which had formerly crowned the *Douvre*.

The centre of it was hollowed out like a basin—the work of, perhaps, centuries of rain.

Gilliatt had guessed correctly. He perceived at the southern angle of the platform a heap of rocks piled one upon the other, probably fragments of the fallen cone. These rocks—which resembled enormous paving stones—would have left room for a wild beast, if one could have climbed to the summit, to secrete himself between them. They rested one against the other, leaving interstices in the heap of rocks. There was neither cave or grotto, but holes—like in a sponge. One of these holes was large enough to admit Gilliatt.

This den was carpeted inside with grass and moss.

Gilliatt would fit into this like a knife into its sheath. The recess was two feet in height at the entrance, but grew smaller towards the end. Stone coffins are sometimes made in this shape. The mass of rocks lay behind this hole towards the south-west, so that it was sheltered from the rain, but exposed to the wind from the north.

Gilliatt thought that it would do well enough. The two problems were solved: the boat had a harbour, and the man a shelter.

The chief merit of the shelter was its nearness to the wreck. The grappling-iron, having fallen between two masses of rock, had become firmly fixed, and Gilliatt rendered it still more secure by placing a large stone upon it.

Now he could devote his whole time to the *Durande*. He had now a home of his own.

The Great Douvre was his dwelling-place and the *Durande* was his workshop.

To go and come; to ascend and descend—nothing was more simple.

He slid easily down on to the deck by means of his knotted cord.

He had done a good day's work; at least the commencement had been satisfactory, and he was pleased with himself. Then he began to feel hungry. He untied his basket of provisions, opened his knife, cut a slice of smoked beef, bit a piece out of his brown loaf, drank a draught from his water-can, and made an admirable supper. To do well and to eat well are two of the joys of life. A full stomach resembles a satisfied conscience.

His supper was over, and there was a little more daylight still before him. He profited by it by at once commencing to lighten the wreck—a work of urgent necessity. He had passed a portion of the day in sorting things. He put on one side, in the strong compartment which held the engines, everything that might be of use—such as wood, iron, rope, canvas, &c. All that was of no service he threw overboard. The cargo of his boat which he had hoisted on to the deck by means of the capstan, compactly as he had fastened it up, was in the way. Gilliatt had noticed a species of niche, which he could reach, in the side of the Little Douvre. These natural cupboards are often to be found in the rocks, though certainly they are unprovided with doors. He thought that it would be safe to use this recess as a store-room, and he therefore placed in it his two boxes, his two sacks, and in front—a little too close to the edge, perhaps, but he had no more room—the basket which contained his provisions.

He had taken care to remove from his box of clothing his sheepskin, his hooded coat, and his waterproof leggings.

To lessen the hold of the wind upon his knotted cord, he had made the end fast to one of the stanchions of the *Durande*.

The upper end of the cord had to be considered.

To make arrangements for the safety of the lower part was well, but on the top, at the spot where the cord passed over the edge of the platform, there was every reason to fear that it

would be chafed, and ultimately cut through by the sharp angle of the rock.

Gilliatt searched amongst the heap of rubbish, which he had placed in reserve, and took from it some scraps of canvas and some frayed rope's-ends, with which he filled his pockets. A sailor would at once have guessed that it was his intention to form with these pieces of canvas and half-untwisted rope a species of cushion, which would prevent the rope from being cut by the rock.

Having collected his materials, he put on his overalls, donned his coat, and tied the sheepskin round his neck by the forelegs, and, thus completely attired, he seized the cord, now securely fastened to the side of the *Durande*, and began the escalade of this gloomy tower of the sea.

In spite of his injured hands he speedily reached the top. The last pale rays of the setting sun were sinking away, and night was coming down upon the sea. There was still a little light upon the top of the *Douvre*.

Gilliatt profited by this to arrange the pad for his cord, and fastened to an angle of the rock several layers of canvas, stuffing them with rope-yarn, and tightly fastening them together, and thus forming something like those safeguards which actresses place upon their knees, to prepare them for the agonies and the supplication of the fifth act. This concluded, Gilliatt arose from his stooping position.

During the last few minutes, whilst he had been engaged with his cord, he had remarked a strange confusion and fluttering of wings above him. It resembled, in the silence of the night, the sounds which an immense bat might cause by the beating of its wings.

Gilliatt raised his eyes.

A large black circle was revolving over his head in the pale twilight of the evening.

Such circles may be seen in pictures over the heads of saints. These, however, are of gold on a dark ground, whilst the circle above Gilliatt was dark on a pale ground. Nothing could have been more strange. It spread round the Great *Douvre* like the Aureol of the night. The circle approached Gilliatt, and then retired—decreased, and then enlarged.

It was a huge flock of sea-birds in a frantic state of surprise—gulls, seamews, frigate-birds, and cormorants.

The Great *Douvre* was probably their roosting-place, and they were coming there for the night. Gilliatt had intruded in

their chamber. They were evidently disturbed by the advent of their unexpected fellow-lodger.

They had never seen a man there before.

This wild hovering, so indicative of terror, lasted some time.

They seemed to be waiting for Gilliatt to yield up their residence.

Gilliatt, full of vague, sad thoughts, followed them with his eyes.

The winged whirlwind seemed at last to come to an arrangement. The circle suddenly changed into a spiral shape, and the cloud settled down upon the Man-Rock, at the other end of the reef.

There they appeared to be conferring and deliberating.

Gilliatt, after settling down in his granite resting-place, and putting a stone under his head for a pillow, could, for a long time, hear the birds screaming and croaking to each other in turn. Then they became silent, and all slept—the birds upon their rock, and Gilliatt upon his.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### IMPORTUNÆQUE VOLUCRES.

GILLIATT slept well. The cold woke him up occasionally during the night. He had very naturally placed his head at the entrance and his feet at the end of his retreat, but he had not taken the precaution of removing from his sleeping-place a number of sharp stones, which did not conduce to his enjoying a good night's rest. Every now and then he half opened his eyes.

At certain intervals he heard loud noises; this was the sea rising in the caverns of the reef, with sounds like the detonations of cannon.

All the circumstances in which he was placed seemed to tell him that he was in a dream. He was indeed the victim of an hallucination. The astonishment at finding himself where he was at night added to it, and he felt himself plunged into a realm of unrealities. He said to himself, "I am dreaming." Then he fell asleep again, and fancied that he was in the *Bû de la Rue*, in *Les Bravées*, at Saint Sampson, and that he was listening to *Déruchette* singing. He was with the real. In

sleep he appeared to wake and live; when he was awake he thought that he slept. In fact, from this time, his life was a dream.

About the middle of the night, a long, low murmur was heard in the heavens. Gilliatt had a confused sense of it in his sleep. It was probably the wind rising. Once a sudden feeling of cold awoke him, and, opening his eyes wider than usual, he saw large masses of cloud in the zenith: the moon was flying past, and a large star following it. Gilliatt had his thoughts full of his dreams, and strange scenes of the night were mingled in a weird manner with his real visions. At daybreak he was very cold, but slept soundly. The sudden appearance of daylight aroused him from a sleep which might have proved dangerous. His retreat faced the rising sun.

Gilliatt yawned, stretched himself, and crawled out of his hole.

He had slept so soundly that he hardly knew where he was.

Little by little the feeling of reality came back to him, and he cried out: "Now for breakfast!" The weather was calm and still; the sky was cold and serene; there were no more clouds—the broom of the day had swept the horizon clean, and the sun had risen favourably. Another fine day had begun. Gilliatt rejoiced at it. He took off his overcoat and leggings, rolled them up in his sheepskin, with the wool inside, and, tying them up with a piece of rope-yarn, thrust them into the hole, so that they might be sheltered from any possible shower of rain. Then he made his bed—that is, he picked out the stones. When this was completed, he slid down the cord to the deck of the *Durande*, and went to the recess in which he had placed his basket of provisions.

The basket had gone. As he had placed it too near the edge, the wind had carried it away and thrown it into the sea.

This showed that the elements were prepared to defend their property. There was a certain amount of ill-feeling displayed in carrying away his basket.

Gilliatt understood it plainly—it was the commencement of hostilities. It is very difficult, when one's life is passed in perfect familiarity with the sea, not to look upon it, together with the winds and the rocks, as living beings.

All that Gilliatt had now to live upon was his biscuit and rye-meal, supplemented with such shell-fish as he could find. The shipwrecked sailor upon the Man-Rock had not found sufficient of the latter to prevent him from dying of hunger. As for catching fish, it was no good thinking of it. Fish always avoid

the neighbourhood of rocks and breakers, and net fishers only lose their time amongst reefs, the points of which destroy their fishing implements.

Gilliatt breakfasted on some limpets, which he removed from the rock with great difficulty, nearly breaking his knife in doing so. Whilst he was making this meagre meal he heard a strange sound a little way out at sea. He glanced in that direction. It was a cloud of gulls and seamews which had alighted upon one of the lower reefs, and were beating each other with their wings, and struggling together, crying and screaming at the same time. All were swarming to the same point. They were hard at work upon something, with beak and talons.

This something was Gilliatt's basket of provisions. The basket—cast upon a sharp rock by the wind—had been broken open, and the birds had pounced upon it, and were tearing away bits of its contents with their ravenous beaks. Even from that distance Gilliatt could recognise his smoked beef and his stock fish.

The birds, too, had commenced hostilities. Gilliatt had taken their lodging; they had taken his supper.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HOW TO MAKE USE OF A ROCK.

A WEEK had passed away. Although it was the season for rain, none had fallen, which was a source of great joy to Gilliatt.

But the work that he had undertaken was, in appearance, at least, beyond human powers. A success was so unlikely, that the very attempt seemed an act of madness. It is not until a task is really commenced that you are able to estimate all the difficulties that are connected with it. At the commencement it is one continued struggle, which shows how hard the end will be. When you place your hand upon a difficulty, it pierces it like a thorn.

Gilliatt immediately found himself face to face with obstacles. In order to remove the engine from the wreck of the *Durande*, in which it was three-parts buried, with any chance of success, such work, at such a time of year, and in such a place, required a whole body of skilled artificers, and he was alone. A complete assortment of carpenters' and engineers' tools was required, and



he had only a saw, an axe, a chisel, and a hammer. He required a good workshop and a comfortable lodging. He had not even a roof to cover him. He required stores and provisions, and had not a morsel of bread.

Anyone who had seen Gilliatt at work on the rock for the next week would not have understood what he was doing. He seemed no longer to think of the *Durande* or of the two *Douvres*. His work seemed to lie amongst the breakers, and he appeared to be absorbed in saving small pieces of wreckage. He took advantage of the low tides to strip the rocks of all the *debris* that they had collected. He went from rock to rock, picking up what the sea had thrown upon them—fragments of canvas, rope's-ends, pieces of iron, splinters of panels, shattered planking, broken yards; here a beam, there a chain, and here a pulley. At the same time he made a careful survey of all the irregularities of the rock; but, to his great disappointment, he could find no habitable cavity—for he was very cold at night in his lodging between the two stones on the summit of the rock, and would fain have found a better shelter.

Two of these cavities were somewhat extensive, and, though the flooring was throughout uneven and sloping, it was not sufficiently so to prevent walking upon it. The wind and the rain had certainly free access, but the highest tides did not reach them. They were close to the Little *Douvre*, and could be reached at all hours. Gilliatt decided that he would use one as a storehouse and the other as a forge. With all the rope and spun yarn that he could collect, he made parcels of the wreckage that he had collected, tying up the woodwork in sheaves and the canvas in bundles, and lashing up the latter carefully. As the tide rose round these bundles, he dragged them across the reefs to his storehouse. In a cavity of the rock he had found a top rope, by means of which he was able to haul large masses of wood. He rescued from the sea, in the same manner, numerous lengths of chain which he had found amongst the breakers. Gilliatt displayed astonishing tenacity in this work. He completed all that he undertook; nothing can resist the industry of the ant. At the end of the week he had gathered into his granite storehouse all the shattered relics of the tempest, and had put them in order. In one corner he had put the sheets, in another the sails. Bowlines were not mixed with halyards. Parrels were sorted according to the number of holes they had. The rope-yarns unwound from the broken anchors were tied in bundles; the dead-eyes without pulleys were separated from the

blocks. Belaying pins, bulls'-eyes, preventer shrouds, down-hauls, snatch-blocks, pendants, kevels, trusses, stoppers, sail-booms—if they were not too much damaged by the weather—had each their separate compartment. All the crossbeams, timber work, stanchions, mast-heads, binding strakes, port lids, and clamps, were collected together in one place. Wherever it was practicable he had placed the planking one on the top of the other. He had carefully separated reef points from cable-stoppers, crows'-feet from tow-lines, large from small pulleys, and fragments of the waist from fragments of the stern. He had kept a place for the eutharpings of the *Durande* which had supported the shrouds of the topmast and the futtock-shrouds. Every portion had its place. The entire wreckage was thus classed. It was chaos in a storehouse. A staysail—a good deal tattered, but kept in its place by huge stones—protected that which the rain was likely to damage. Though the bows of the *Durande* had been very much crushed, he had managed to secure the two cat-heads, with their three pulleys. He had also found the bowsprit, and had much trouble in unrolling the gammoning, as it was very hard and tight, and had, according to the usual custom, been put on in dry weather with the aid of a windlass. Gilliatt, however, persevered in his task until he had got it off, and this thick piece of rigging proved of great service to him. He had also discovered one of the small anchors, which had become fixed in a shoal, and which had been left visible by the retiring tide. He found in Tangrouille's berth a lump of chalk, which he carefully put away, as, later on, he might require to make marks. A leather fire-bucket and several pails, in pretty good order, completed his working equipment. All that remained of the *Durande's* cargo of coal was stored away in the warehouse. In eight days this work of saving the fragments of the wreck was completed. The rock was cleared, and the *Durande* considerably lightened. Nothing remained but the hull and the engines. That portion of the foreside bulwarks which hung to it did not weigh heavily upon the hull, as it was partly supported by a ledge of rock. It was, however, very large, and too heavy to drag; besides, it would have taken up too much room in the storehouse. It looked something like a raft. Gilliatt left it where it was. Gilliatt had eagerly sought for the figure-head of the *Durande*—"the doll," as the people called it—but the waves had carried it away. Had Gilliatt not had such need of his two arms, he would willingly have given them to have found it.

At the entrance to the storehouse were two heaps—a heap of iron, good for forging; and a heap of wood, good for burning.

Gilliatt was always at work by daybreak. Except the hour when he slept, he did not take a moment's rest.

The sea-birds flew hither and thither, and wondered at the man who was always at work.

## CHAPTER X

### THE FORGE.

Now that the storehouse was completed, Gilliatt set to work on his forge. The second cavity chosen by him was a species of passage which ran rather far into the rock. His first idea had been to make this his dwelling-place, but the wind, which constantly blew through it, caused him to renounce his intention. This draught, however, gave him the idea that it would be an excellent place for a forge. As this cavern could not be his residence, why should it not be his workshop? To utilize an opponent is one of the first steps towards a victory. The wind was Gilliatt's enemy, Gilliatt hoped to convert it into his servant. They say of men: fit for everything, but good for nothing—they may say the same of cavities in the rocks. They may offer many advantages, but, on examination, we find that they are useless. In one place we find a hollow which would make an excellent bath, only it lets the water escape by some hole in it. In another we find a room, but with no ceiling to it. Here is a bed of moss, but the bed is saturated with water; and there is a most comfortable easy-chair, only the seat, arm, and back are of hard rock.

The forge which Gilliatt wished to establish had been designed by Nature, but to transform this design so as to render it practicable was by no means easy. With three or four large rocks, placed in the shape of a funnel, and having a narrow aperture at the end, chance had constructed a huge, awkward blower, very different to those forge bellows measuring fourteen feet in length, which at every stroke yield an amount of ninety-eight thousand inches of air. This was quite another sort of thing. The proportions of the hurricane cannot be measured. This excess of power was embarrassing, as it was difficult to regulate it. This cavern had two drawbacks—the air blew through it

from one end to the other, and there was a stream of water through it also. This was not the tide, but a small, continual flow, more resembling a spring than a torrent. The foam which was ceaselessly cast upon the rock by the surf, rising sometimes to a hundred feet in height, had, in the end, filled a sort of natural reservoir on the top of the rock above the cavity. The overflow of this reservoir caused, a little behind the precipice, a small waterfall of about an inch in width, falling from a height of four or five fathoms. The rainfall also served to fill it. From time to time a passing cloud replenished this reservoir, which was inexhaustible and always overflowing. The water was brackish and quite undrinkable, but beautifully clear, though salt. This stream fell gracefully from the points of the massive vegetation, as water drips from the extremity of a hair.

The idea struck Gilliatt of making use of this water to regulate the air. By means of a funnel made of two or three planks hastily put together, he formed some pipes, into one of which a top was inserted, and placed a large pail to act as a lower reservoir without check or counterpoise, and finished off by air-tight stuffing above and orifices below. Gilliatt, who, we have before said, was a bit of an engineer as well as a carpenter, had managed to construct, instead of blacksmith's bellows, which he did not possess, a less perfect apparatus than what is known nowadays as a "*cayniardelle*," but not so rough as that in use in the Pyrenees, termed a "*trompe*."

He made some of his rye-meal into paste, and also some white rope into oakum. With this paste and oakum, and some wooden wedges, he filled up all the fissures in the rock, leaving only a small orifice for air, formed of a portion of a powder-flask, which he had found on the Durande, and which had been used for loading the small signal-gun. This air-hole was directed on to a large stone, which he intended to use as the hearth of the forge, and was plugged up with a piece of tow when not in active operation. Then Gilliatt heaped up coal and wood, struck his steel on the rocky wall, caught the spark in a handful of tow, and, with it, kindled his wood and coal into a blaze. He tried his blower, and found that it worked admirably. Gilliatt felt the pride of a Cyclops; he was master of the castle, the air, the fire, and the water.

Master of the air—for had he not given the wind a kind of lung, created in the granite a breathing apparatus, and changed the draught into a blower? Master of the water—for had he

not manufactured a "trompe" with the stream of the little waterfall? Master of the fire—for had he not drawn it from the rocky walls of the dripping cavern?

The cavity was open to the sky, and the smoke easily found its way out, blackening the curved precipice as it did so. These rocks, which had formerly been white with foam, were now blackened with soot.

Gilliatt selected for his anvil a large, round stone of very close grain, of about the shape and form required. It was something to beat upon, but was dangerous, as it might fly off in splinters. One of its ends was finished off into a rounded point, and might serve, at a pinch, for the conical horn of the anvil; but the other one, that should have had a pyramidical form, was wanting. It was the old stone anvil of the Troglodyte race. The surface, which had been polished by the waves, was almost as strong as steel.

Gilliatt bitterly regretted not having brought his own anvil. As he was ignorant of the fact that the *Durande* had been cut in two by the storm, he had hoped to have found the carpenter's chest, with all the necessary tools, in the forehold; but it was that very portion of the vessel that had been carried away. The two cavities of the rock, which Gilliatt had utilised, were close together, and both storehouse and forge communicated. Each evening, when his work was done, Gilliatt supped on a morsel of biscuit, soaked in water, or a sea urchin or a crab, or a few *shataignes de mer*, the only food procurable on the rock; and then, shivering in the wind, like his knotted cord, ascended to his lair on the Great Douvre for his night's rest.

The kind of abstraction in which Gilliatt lived augmented the materialism of his occupation. The strong dose of reality that he was imbibing frightened him. His severe corporeal labour took away none of that strange, dazed feeling which he experienced at finding himself in such a place, and engaged in such an enterprise. Usually, material lassitude is a thread which draws us to earth, but the very strangeness of the work that he had undertaken maintained him in a sort of ideal and twilight kind of existence. His hammer-strokes seemed to fall upon the clouds. At other times it appeared as if his tools were weapons. He had the singular feeling that he was repelling or preparing for some latent peril or attack. Untwisting ropes, unravelling threads of canvas from a sail, propping up timbers, seemed to him as though he was fastening warlike instruments. The thousand-and-one cares that he had to take in the efforts of

his task ended by feeling like precautions taken against some active and intelligent enemy, whose aggressions were hardly veiled, and therefore easy to anticipate. Gilliatt could not put his ideas into words, but, for all that, he could conceive the ideas themselves. He felt that he was more a warrior than a workman. He had taken up his abode on the rock to tame and to subdue savage nature, and, as the perception grew stronger upon him, his intellect expanded. All around him was the wide field of labour wasted and lost. Nothing is more wearing to the intellect than to watch the diffusion of forces in the fathomless and illimitable ocean. The mind craves for an explanation of the reason of it all. That vast space—always in motion—the ceaseless turmoil of the waters—the clouds that seem ever speeding upon some errand—the vast, mysterious exercise of power—all this is an enigma hard to be solved. To what does this constant movement tend? What do these winds build up? What fearful work are these Titanic blows engaged upon? These shocks, these sobs, these cries, what do they end in? and what is the meaning of all this noise and tumult? The ebb and flow of these questions is as eternal as the tide of ocean. Gilliatt knew what he was doing, but the agitation that spread all around him puzzled him with its constant questions. In a purely mechanical way, and by the pressure of circumstances, without any other result than a feeling of strange and unconscious bewilderment, Gilliatt, in his solitary reveries, in some way or other, compared his labours with the wasted toil of the ocean. How, indeed, could he escape yielding to, or being influenced by, the terrible mystery of the ever-toiling sea? How could he avoid pondering, as far as his intellect would carry him, upon the ceaseless swell of the waves, the cruel perseverance of the foam, the daily wasting away of the rocks, the frantic struggles of the four winds of heaven? What terror lay hid in the thoughts of the perpetual heaving of those unfathomable depths—those clouds which seemed to represent the endless toil of the daughters of Danaus! Was all this labour and pain for no end or object?

No, it could not be for nothing; but Thou, O Unknown, alone can say for what!

## CHAPTER XI.

## A DISCOVERY.

Rocks on the coast are sometimes visited by mankind, but a rock far away on the ocean never. What would people go there for? It is not an island. No supplies can be drawn from it. No fruit, no trees, no pasturage, no cattle; not even a spring of fresh water. It is a nudity in the midst of a solitude. It is a Man-Rock, with precipices above and rugged reefs beneath. Nothing is to be found there but wreck and ruin. This description of rocks, which, in the old tongue of the sea, are termed "solitary," are, as we have before repeated, wild and strange. The sea is there left wholly to herself; there she is her own mistress. No apparition from the world of land disturbs her. Man is an object of terror to the ocean, for she distrusts him; she sedulously hides from him what she is, and the deeds that she does. Once safe in the refuge of the rock she feels secure, for man will never intrude there. The soliloquy of the waves will never be disturbed there. She toils at the rock, repairs its injuries, sharpens its points and renews them when they require it. She undertakes the perforation of the rock, wears down the softer stone and exposes the harder layers; removes, as it were, the flesh, and leaves the skeleton; searches, dissects, perforates, grooves and bores, she forms chambers. On a large scale, she imitates the sponge—hollows it out in the interior and carves it outside. In that secret mountain, which is hers, and hers only, she has caverns, sanctuaries, and palaces. She has her splendid and hideous vegetation, composed of floating herbs that tear with the teeth, and monsters that take root, and she conceals all those terrible magnificences in the dim depths of her ocean realm. The isolated rock has no eye to watch it, no spy to dog its movements. There she is at liberty to develop all that mysterious side of her nature—far from man's interference. Here she deposits the hideous living secretions of her life. All her hidden mysteries are here assembled. Promontories, capes, headlands, breakers and shoals are, we assert, real constructions of the ocean. Geological formation is but a trifling matter when compared to oceanic construction. Those rocks, those houses of the wave, those pyramids and pits of foam, all form part of that mysterious art which the author of this book has, in another place, entitled the "Art of Nature," and

have a gigantic style of their own. Chance and design seem to be strangely mingled together. Her works are of every description—the intricacies of the abode of the polypi, the sublimity of the cathedral, the wild extravagance of the pagoda, the grandeur of the mountain, the delicacy of the jeweller's work, and the intense terror of the tomb. There are cells similar to those in the nest of the wasp; dens as in a menagerie; winding passages as in a mole-hill; dungeons as in a Bastille; and ambuscades as in a camp. They have doors, but they are closed up; pillars, but they are defaced; towers that totter, and bridges that bend. The divisions have no convenience: this one is only for birds, that alone for fish. You cannot pass through them. The style of architecture varies and changes; sometimes it obeys, at others differs from the laws of building; breaks off, stops suddenly, commences in an archivolt, and finishes in an architrave—block piled upon block. Enceladus is the builder. A strange system of dynamics here shows its problems all worked out. Pendent stalactites threaten, but never fall. No one can say how those giddy heights are piled up. Everywhere there are curves, false entrances, chasms, overhanging rocks piled up without reason—a very Babel of architecture broken loose. The mighty architect of the Unknown has no settled plan, but yet He succeeds in all He undertakes. Massive rocks, heaped together recklessly, form an enormous monument, obedient to no fixed law, but yet retaining their equilibrium. Strength alone is not here; it is eternity, but, at the same time, confusion. The wild quiverings of the wave seem to have been changed to stone by the enchanter's wand. A reef is neither more nor less than a petrified tempest. Nothing appeals to the mind more than this rude and savage architecture—always ready to fall, yet ever maintaining its position. It seems a combination of alliance and hostility. It is a battle of opposing lines resulting in the erection of a mighty edifice formed by the confederacy of those ancient antagonists—the storm and the ocean.

The Douvre Rock is one of the most terrible masterpieces of this strange alliance.

With all the sinister solicitude of its nature, the sea had commenced and finished it; the snarling wave had licked it into shape; it was dark, treacherous, and hideous—full of hidden caverns.

It had a complete system of submarine caves, winding and turning and losing themselves in fathomless depths. Some of the apertures of this labyrinth were left dry at low tide, and



the explorer might venture in ; but, should he do so, it was at his own risk and peril. Gilliatt had determined, in pursuance of the task that he had undertaken, to explore these winding passages. There was not one that was not hideous to the eye : everywhere was to be seen in them that strange resemblance to a slaughter-house thrust on the spectator, with all the terrible exaggeration of the sea. The traces of blood and murder were as apparent there as in the passage between the two Douvres. Anyone who has not seen the strange and hideous frescoes with which Nature adorns the eternal granite walls of her caves can have no idea of their appalling aspect. These cruel caverns were false and treacherous. It was dangerous to linger in them : the rising tide filled them to the ceiling. Limpets and other productions of the sea abounded in them. Huge masses of stones were heaped together in their recesses : some of these stones weighed more than a ton ; they were of all sizes and colours, but the majority were of a deep blood-red. Some of them, covered with hairy, slimy weed, seemed like gigantic green moles boring their way through the rocks. Many of these caverns terminated abruptly in a lofty hall ; others were full of narrow passages, which extended through the rock in dark winding fissures. These were the streets of the submarine city. As they penetrated further into the rock, these fissures narrowed so much that it was impossible for a man to make his way through them. A lighted torch thrust in showed nothing but dark cavities, with water constantly dripping from the roof.

One day Gilliatt, on an exploring expedition, ventured into one of these passages. The state of the tide was favourable ; it was a fine, sunny day, and the sea was quite calm. There was no fear that any sudden rising of the tide would make the attempt dangerous. Two urgent necessities, which we will mention, had compelled Gilliatt to undertake this exploration ; the first was to gather wreckage to assist him in his labours, and the other to collect crabs and crayfish for his food, for limpets and other shell-fish were beginning to grow scarce on the Douvres. The passage was excessively narrow, and progress was most difficult, but, seeing a gleam of daylight on ahead, Gilliatt made himself as small as he could, and squeezed his way in. He had reached, without knowing it, the interior of the rock upon the rugged points of which Clubin had wrecked the *Durande*. The rock, though precipitous and inaccessible on the outside, was quite hollow within ; it had galleries, vaults, and chambers, like the tombs of Egypt's ancient kings. These

winding passages were the most complicated of all the labyrinths—the work of the water, the undermining of the persevering ocean. The branches and passages of this subterranean hollow communicated, doubtless, with the open sea by other passages, some opening on to the surface of the sea, whilst others had their entrances deep below its waters. It was close to this spot, though Gilliatt was ignorant of it, that Clubin had thrown himself into the sea.

Gilliatt, in this cavern—fit abode for crocodiles, though, fortunately, there were none there to be feared—crept on, with head bent down, clambering and winding, sometimes hitting himself against the low ceiling, losing his footing and then regaining it, and making but slow progress. Little by little the narrow passage through which he was advancing widened, a spot of half-light shone on him, and the next moment he found himself at the entrance of a cavern of a very singular description.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE INTERIOR OF AN ABODE BENEATH THE WAVE.

THE light had appeared at the right moment. A step further, and Gilliatt would have been plunged into a vast pool, possibly almost fathomless, whose cold, icy waters would paralyse the limbs of the stoutest swimmer. There was also no means of climbing out of it, as its smooth and precipitous walls offered no resting-place for either hand or foot.

Gilliatt stopped short. The passage, from which he had just emerged ended in a narrow, slimy projection standing out from the wall; he put his back to it, and surveyed the scene before him. He was in an immense cave. Above his head the ceiling somewhat resembled, in shape, the interior of a vast skull that had been recently dissected. The dripping veins of the rock above his head resembled the branching fibres and jagged sutures of the skull. For a ceiling, there was rock; for flooring, the water. The waves of the ocean, confined between the four walls, seemed to form a species of quivering pavement. The grotto was closed in on all sides; not a window, not even a loophole, no aperture in its walls, no crack in the ceiling; all the light rose up from below, through the water—a strange, weird light.

Gilliatt, whose eyes had become accustomed to this semi-

darkness, could see well in this strange, dim vault. He had often visited the caves of Plémont, in Jersey; the Creux-Maille, in Guernsey; the Shops, in Sark—so called because the smugglers placed their goods there for sale; but none of these caves were to be compared to this subterranean and submarine retreat that he had just discovered. Beneath the water at his feet, Gilliatt could perceive a sort of chancel arch. This arch, a natural ogive, formed by the action of the water, stood between two dark and gloomy pillars. It was by this submarine entrance that the light filtered through the sea and reached the cave—a strange light coming from the depths of a gulf. This gleam spread out like a vast fan, and was reflected on the rocks; its rays, divided into broad, straight bands, showed in relief on the darkness below, and grew more brilliant and duller as it fell, now upon one irregularity and now upon another—seeming as if it came through sheets of glass. There was light in the cavern, but it did not seem to emanate from any natural source; it seemed, when you gazed upon it, as though you had visited some other sphere. The light was a riddle, resembling the blue-green gleam from the eye of the Sphinx. The whole interior of the cavern looked like a death's head of magnificent splendour and enormous proportions. The ceiling was the hollow of the brain, the arch was the mouth, but the eyes were wanting. This mouth, alternately swallowing and giving back the ebb and flow of the waters, opened wide to the daylight outside, and seemed to be drinking in the light, and vomiting it out again with bitterness, like certain reasonable beings who are filled with all the evil passions of human nature.

The rays of the sun pouring through this inlet, passing through the medium of the sea-water, were of a bright green colour, and resembled a ray of light from Aldebaran. The water, full of this soft brilliancy, looked like a liquid emerald; an exquisitely delicate hue of aqua-marine tinted the whole of the cavern; the roof, with its cerebral lobes and its rampant ramifications, resembling the fibres of the nerves, gave out a soft reflection of chrysoprasso. The ripples of the water reflected on the roof were shimmering, appearing and disappearing continually, and glistening in a thousand golden sparkles, as though performing some intricate dance. The effect was weird and spectral, and the looker-on marvelled whether it was rejoicing over something secured, or delighting at some attempt to be made, that rendered this network of living gold so full of

animation and brilliancy. From the ceiling and the projections of the rock hung fibrous marine plants, the roots of which, penetrating through the granite walls, were, no doubt, steeped in some pool situated in the rocks above, whilst from their extreme ends pearly drops of water fell one by one. These fell into the sea below with a soft and musical sound. The whole scene was strange and wonderful; nothing could be imagined more exquisite, and yet more full of melancholy; it was like a palace of Death, in which the owner sat smiling and serene.

### CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT WAS SEEN PLAINLY, AND WHAT WAS SEEN DIMLY.

A PLACE of shadow, full of light—such was this monstrous cave.

The beat of the surf could be felt throughout the place. The oscillation without raised and depressed the surface of the water with a regular deep respiration. It seemed as though this mighty green centre was tenanted by a mysterious sentient soul, as it rose and then sank into silence.

The water was like some limpid, magic pool, and Gilliatt could perceive, at various unknown depths, several submerged points and surfaces of projecting rocks, tinged, as they were lower in the waters, with a deeper and darker green. There were several dark hollows, probably unfathomable.

On each side of the submarine porch were rough, depressed archways, full of deep shadow within, leading to small lateral caves, sideways to the central cavern, accessible, perhaps, at very low tides. These fissures had roofs, in the form of inclined planes, or at angles more or less obtuse. Small beaches, a few feet in width, left bare by the tide, lay at the entrance of these recesses, and were lost in them. Here and there long pieces of seaweed undulated between the waves, like tresses of hair quivering in the wind, whilst occasional glimpses could be caught of huge forests of marine vegetation. Both above and beneath the water the whole wall of the cavern, from the top to the bottom, from the summit of the vault to where the sides lost themselves in the black shadow of the waves, was lined with that botanic growth of the sea so rarely visible to the human eye, which the ancient Spanish mariners called *praderias de mar*. A thick mossy growth, having all the shades of the olive,

concealed, whilst it enlarged, the projections of the rock. From every curve and protuberance hung the thin, fluted strips of seaweed which sailors use as a weather-glass, and their glossy bands waved gently in the light breeze which permeated the cave.

Beneath this growth peeped forth, by fits and starts, some of the rarest gems of ocean jewellery—ivory shells, strombi, mitre shells, helmet shells; small cuttle-fish; univalves, struthiolaires, and tenanted cerites. The bell-shaped patellæ, resembling microscopic wigwams, clung closely to the rocks, and formed themselves into villages, in the streets of which wandered the oscabron, or beetle of the sea. There were not many large pebbles in these grottoes, but where they were, the shell-fish took refuge between them. Shell-fish are the noblemen of the ocean, and, adorned in all their grand attire, avoid the rough contact of the pebble population. The glittering heaps of them in certain spots below the waves gave out a brilliant iridescence, through which the eye could catch occasional glimpses of azure, mother-of-pearl, and gold, mingled with all the tints of the sea. On the division of the cavern, a little above the water line, was a singularly magnificent plant, which clung like a border to the seaweed, and appeared to continue and complete it. This plant—thick, fibrous, and inextricably entangled, and of a very dark hue—displayed to the gaze confused and dusky sheets, dotted all over with little flowers of the colour of *lapis lazuli*. Seen through the nucleus of the water, these flowers glowed brilliantly, and seemed to resemble bright blue flames. Above the water they were flowers, beneath it they were sapphires; so that the waves, rising and inundating the floor of the cave, which was clothed with these plants, seemed to encrust the rock with jewels.

At every upheaving of the waters, which appeared as if acted upon by a gigantic lung, these flowers grew more and more magnificent, and as it sunk, they once again lost their brilliant hues. Melancholy resemblance to human destiny! Inhalation is life, and exhalation is death. One of the wonders of the cavern was the rock itself—with a wall here, an arch there, and here again a pillar; it was in some places rude and naked, and in others delicately sculptured. Mind seemed to have been mingled in its formation with the crude stupidity of the granite. It was the wondrous produce of the hands of ocean. Here was a face of the wall, regularly cut, and covered with round bosses in various positions, almost resembling work in bas-relief. Gazing upon the sculpture you could have imagined Prometheus

designing the plan for execution by Michael Angelo. It seemed as if, with a few strokes of the hammer, the genius could have completed what the giant had begun. In other spots the rock was damascened like the shield of a Saracenic warrior, or engraved like a Florentine goblet. There were panels like Corinthian bronzes, and arabesques such as you see on the portals of a mosque and Runic stones, with the faint imprints of claws marked upon them. Marine plants, throwing out tendrils on all sides, crossed and recrossed on a bed of golden lichens, covered the walls with their threadlike branches. The cavern had in some places all the delicate fretwork to be found in the Moorish palace of Grenada. It was, in short, the meeting of barbarism and the jeweller's art, united in all the magnificent deformity of the architecture of chance.

The glorious stains of the ocean covered the walls with a tapestry of velvet. The precipitous sides were festooned with flowering marine creepers, clinging firmly to every projection, and whose ornamental designs seemed to have been arranged by a human intelligence. Strange plants, radiant with blossom, showed themselves here and there, festooned with cunning skill. Every design was there, and all in perfect taste and harmony. The wondrous light that rose from beneath the wave, combining the twilight of ocean with gleams from Paradise, blended together all the rugged features of the place in one soft diffusion of colour. Each ripple was a prism in itself. Every outline beneath these irridiscent undulations had the effect of forming chromatic tints seen through two convex glasses, like solar spectres floating upon the sea. In this diaphanous dawn, fragments of the rainbow seemed to be submerged in the waves. In distant corners of the cavern the wave appeared filled with a kind of moonlight; every possible splendour seemed to be joined and united together, forming a weird, nocturnal effect. Nothing could be more strange and enigmatical than the wild splendour of the cave. Enchantment seemed to have constructed it by her magic spell. The fantastic vegetation and the rude formation of the rock agreed and opposed each other, the utter difference producing perfect harmony. Nothing could have caused a more exquisite effect than this apparently ill-assorted union. The vegetation climbed over the projections of the walls, and seemed to cover them with caresses. The kisses of the bare rock and the wild plants had a strange and wonderful effect. The massive pillars had their capitals garlanded with slender creepers, and a quiver ran through the body as the

thought flashed across the mind of fairy fingers caressing the feet of monstrous behemoths. The rock supported the creeper, and the creeper clung to the rock with a grace that had something terrible in it. The union of all these opposing elements resulted in a vague, mysterious kind of beauty.

The works of nature, not less magnificent in their way than the works of art, have an absolutism entirely their own, and force it upon the mind. The unexpected governs the spirit; it forces a premeditation upon you beyond the power of man to resist, and never is it more irresistible than when it suddenly emerges from the splendour of the terrible.

The cave, if we may venture to call it so, was sideralised. The mind had to yield to the unexpected revelations that assailed it. The whole crypt was filled with the light of the Apocalypse. You were not even sure that the thing itself existed. A reality, stamped with an impossibility, stared you in the face. You gazed upon it, you touched it, and yet you could hardly believe in it.

Was it the light of day that shone in from that window beneath the wave? Was it really water that rippled and shimmered in that dusky pool? That gateway, those arches, were they not merely airy shapes fashioned to deceive the eye of man? Was it really stone upon which your feet trod? Would not all these pillars fade and melt away like vapour? What was all that gem-like heap of shells that was visible? How far was this from life, from earth, from man? What strange spell controlled this mysterious twilight? What strange emotion, almost resembling a feeling of awe, mingled with the restless swaying—the plants of ocean moving with every ripple.

The cave was of an oblong shape, and at the end rose a Cyclopean arch, in perfect proportion, giving entrance to a shadowy chamber. It was a cavern within a cavern—the sanctuary of the tabernacle. Behind a sheet of brilliant green, a veil to this temple of the sea, standing above the water, was a square stone, resembling an altar, surrounded on all sides by water. It seemed as if a goddess had just quitted it. You could not refrain from picturing to yourself that beneath that vaulted roof, upon that altar, unformed by human skill, dwelt some celestial being, who, ever pensive in her naked beauty, became invisible as mortal tread approached her sanctuary. It was difficult to conceive that this glorious chamber had not some such inhabitant. An effort of the will might conjure up the vision

In all its beauty. A flood of chaste light falling upon white shoulders, hardly seen; a forehead radiant as the dawn, an Olympian visage of the most exquisite oval type; a bosom such as the sculptor's art has not yet portrayed; arms modestly crossed; a wealth of golden hair flowing down, unconfined by any fillet; a form of perfect symmetry, white as the driven snow, half shrouded by a sacred cloud; the shape of a nymph, the appearance of a virgin—a Venus rising from the sea, an Eve emerging from chaos—such was the dream that floated before the mind as the eyes gazed on the chamber. It seemed impossible that such a phantom had not been there. A woman, in all her majesty of naked beauty, with a shining star upon her forehead, might have been seated upon that altar not long before. Upon that pedestal, from which emanated a sentiment of ineffable ecstasy, you could picture to yourself a living, breathing form, all whiteness and beauty. The spirit of the place, an Amphitrite—a Tethys—a Diana, subject to the power of love—a statue of the ideal, gleaming through the shadows with eyes of love and tenderness. It was she who, on her departure, had left behind her that light—a species of luminous perfume issuing from her star-bedecked form. The glamour of the phantom was no longer there; you could no longer see the figure, made only to be seen by the invisible, but you felt that it had been there; there was that sensation in every nerve and fibre of the body which is voluptuousness itself. The goddess herself was absent, but her divinity was there. The beautiful grotto was a fit receptacle for such a tenant. It was for the sake of this presiding spirit, for this pearl-like fairy, for this queen of gentle breezes, for this exquisite creation of the wave, it was for her sake—at least, so the mind would have one believe—that the entrance to the cavern had been so carefully concealed, so that nothing might disturb the repose of the beautiful spirit, for whom gloom is respect, and silence homage.

Gilliatt, who was one of nature's seers, stood musing and filled with every variety of thought.

All of a sudden, a few feet below him, in the brilliant transparency of the waters which gleamed like liquified diamonds, he was aware of the movement of some mysterious object. A species of long, ragged band was moving gently through the rippling waters. It was not floating however, but darted rapidly about from side to side, evidently endowed with motive power. This object was something of the shape of a jester's bauble covered with small protuberant points. These points



had a flabby appearance, and a strange, quivering motion, and seemed covered with a peculiar dust, upon which the water had no effect. It did more than create a feeling of terror—it was foul and loathsome. As you gazed on it you felt that it was something monstrous. It appeared to be alive, unless, indeed, the whole thing was a delusion. It made for the more shadowy portion of the cavern, and disappeared in the darkness. The deep shadows of the waves became darker and darker as its illumined form glided into them and disappeared from view.

## BOOK II.

*THE LABOUR.*

## CHAPTER I.

## WORKING WITHOUT TOOLS.

THE visitor found it hard to quit this cavern; the entrance had been inconvenient, and the exit was more difficult still. Gilliatt, however, succeeded in reaching his starting-point, and felt no inclination to return. He had not found in it what he sought for, and he had no time to indulge in mere curiosity. He put his forge into work; he wanted tools, and so set about making them. For fuel he had the wreck; water was his motive power, the wind was his bellows, a stone for an anvil; for art, he had his instinct, and for power, his will.

Gilliatt put all his heart and soul into the gigantic task that he had undertaken.

The weather seemed inclined to lend him all possible aid. It remained perfectly dry, without any equinoctial gales. The month of March came in with fine weather. The days lengthened. The bright blue sky, the calm of the vast ocean, and the peaceful serenity of the noontide, all seemed to exclude every idea of evil intentions on the part of the elements. The sea glittered brightly in the rays of the sun. A kiss is often the prelude to an act of treachery, and in such caresses the sea is no niggard. A woman's smile is not always to be trusted. There was very little wind; the hydraulic bellows worked all the better for this—too much wind would have been an impediment. Gilliatt possessed a saw, and he manufactured a file; with the saw he attacked the wood, and with his file the metal; then he made use of the two iron hands of the blacksmith—the pincers and the pliers. The pincers grasp, the pliers handle the work; one acts like the wrist, the other like the fingers. A tool-chest is an organism of itself. Little by little, Gilliatt manufactured his auxiliaries, and constructed his

weapons of warfare. He made a screen for his forge with a piece of tarpaulin.

One of his principal labours was the assorting and repairing of his pulleys. He mended the blocks and sheaves; he cut off the shattered extremities of the joists, and re-shaped them. He had, as we have said, for his carpentry, a number of pieces of wood of every description stowed away, and sorted according to shape, size, and material—oak in one place, pine in another; the curved pieces, like riders, separated from the straight pieces like binding stakes. This formed his reserve of supports and levers, of which he might stand in great need at any moment.

Any one who desires to put together tackle for hoisting has to provide himself with beams and small cables. But these alone are not sufficient: he requires ropes. Gilliatt repaired the cables, both great and small. He frayed out the torn sails, and thus procured excellent yarn, with which he made twine, and with this twine he spliced the ropes. These joins, however, were liable to rot, and it was therefore necessary to make use of the cordage as soon as possible. He had only been able to make white tow, for he was without tar. When he had finished with the ropes, he went to work upon the chains. He was able, thanks to the lateral point of the anvil, to forge large and solid rings. With these rings he joined the pieces of broken chain, and formed them into lengths. To work alone at a forge is very trying; he managed, however, to do it somehow. It is true that he had only to make small articles, and that he could hold them in one hand with his pincers, whilst he hammered with the other. He cut into convenient lengths the iron bars of the captain's bridge, and hammered one end into a point and the other into a broad, flat head, thus making large spike nails of about a foot in length.

These nails are much used in bridge-building, and are useful in fixing material to the rocks. Why did Gilliatt take all this trouble?

We shall see presently.

He had several times to put a fresh edge to his axe, and to file the teeth of his saw; for doing the latter work he had made for himself a three-sided file.

He sometimes made use of the capstan of the *Durande*; the hook of the chain broke, he manufactured another. By aid of pincers and pliers, and using his chisel like a turnscrew, he began to remove the paddle-wheels, and, after some trouble, he succeeded. He was able to do this, because they were of a

peculiar make. He contrived to stow the wheels away in the paddle-boxes which protected them. With these, Gilliatt made two large boxes, in which he placed all the pieces of the wheels, carefully numbered.

The bit of chalk that he had found came in very handy for this work.

He placed the two packing-cases on the strongest part of the deck of the *Durande*.

When this preliminary work was over, Gilliatt found himself face to face with his great difficulty, and that was how to dispose of the engines.

To take the paddle-wheels to pieces had been practicable, but to do the same to the engines was impossible.

In the first place, Gilliatt knew very little about its mechanism. He might, working as he should, at haphazard, do it some fatal injury. Even should he imprudently endeavour to take it to pieces bit by bit, he required other tools than those that he possessed, or which he could make in a cave, with the wind for bellows and a stone for an anvil. In attempting to take the engine to pieces there was great risk of destroying it entirely.

Here he seemed to be placed in the presence of an utter impossibility.

A high wall seemed to stand between him and success.

What was to be done?

## CHAPTER II.

### A STUPENDOUS TASK.

GILLIATT had an idea of his own.

Ever since the mason-carpenter of Salbris, in the sixteenth century, when science was still in its infancy—before the Amontons had found the first law of friction, Lakin, the second, or Colomb, the third—without guide or counsel; with no other assistant than a child—his son—with clumsy tools, solved, in the clock-tower of the church of Charité-sur-Loire, five or six problems in which statics and dynamics were inextricably mixed up, like cart-wheels in a street block. Since that wonderful and unheard-of operation, by which he found means, without breaking a single wire or throwing the cog of a single wheel out of

gear, to lower, in one piece, by a wonderfully simple invention, from the second story to the first, the massive clock, manufactured of iron and copper, as large as a watchman's box, with its movement, cylinders, barrels, drums, hooks, and weights—one of which weighed five hundred pounds—its bells, peals, its apparatus for striking the hours, and all its complicated machinery—since this man, whose name even has been lost, completed this miracle, no such bold attempt, such as Gilliatt contemplated, has ever been undertaken.

Gilliatt's operation was more difficult, therefore his success would be more glorious.

The weight, the delicacy of the apparatus, the complication of difficulties of all kinds were as great in moving the engines of the *Durande* as of the clock of *Charité-sur-Loire*.

The Gothic mechanic had an assistant, in the shape of his son. Gilliatt was quite alone and unaided. There was a crowd from *Meung-sur-Loire*, from *Nevers*, and even from *Orleans*, which, at need, could have assisted the mason of *Salbris*, and who certainly encouraged him by their sympathising applause—Gilliatt had no one near him—no sound, save the wind, no crowd, save the tumultuous waves of the ocean.

There is nothing equal to the timidity of rashness, unless it be its daring. Where ignorance becomes bold she has a sort of compass to work by, and that compass is an intuition of the truth, oftener more apparent to the mind of simplicity than to the brain of philosophy.

To be ignorant invites you to endeavour.

Ignorance is a dream, and curiosity, which ever forms part of a dream, develops into a power.

Knowledge often prevents great attempts. Had Gama possessed experience, he would have recoiled from the attempt to double the Cape of Storms. Had Christopher Columbus been a good geographer, he would never have discovered America.

The second man who ascended to the summit of Mount Blanc was a learned man—*Saussure*; the first was a shepherd—*Balmat*.

But, we may remark, that these cases which we have cited are exceptions, and in no way detract from science, which will ever maintain its place. An ignorant man may hit upon a discovery by chance, but the scientific man invents.

Gilliatt's boat was still at anchor in the little bay, where the sea left it in peace, and he had, as the reader will remember, arranged everything so as to maintain free communication with her. He one day measured her carefully all over, especially

her breadth of beam; then he returned to the *Durande* and measured the floor of the engine-room. This, without the wheels, was just two feet less than the breadth of his boat, so that he could get the engine into it.

But how was he to get it there?

### CHAPTER III.

#### GILLIATT'S MASTERPIECE.

ANY fisherman who would have been foolish enough, at this season of the year, to linger about the scene of Gilliatt's labours would have been repaid for his courage by a very strange sight between the *Douvres* Rocks, and this is what he would have seen: Four powerful beams, placed at equal distances from each other, stretching from one *Douvre* to the other, and jammed firmly between the rocks, thus making their hold very secure. On the Little *Douvre* their extremities rested on projections of the rock. On the Great *Douvre* their ends had been driven forcibly into the face of the rock by blows of a hammer, wielded by the powerful hand of a workman standing upon the beam which he was driving in. These supports were longer than the space between the rocks, hence the firmness with which they were fixed, and the incline which they had. They formed an acute angle from the Great *Douvre*, and an obtuse one from the Little *Douvre*. Their inclination was only slight, but it was not the same in all, which was a defect. But for this they might have been supposed to be prepared for the laying of a ship's deck. To these four beams were attached four sets of hoisting apparatus, each one of which had its pendent and tackle fall, with the strange peculiarity of having the blocks with two sheaves at one extremity of the beam, and a single pulley at the other. This distance, which was too great not to be hazardous, was, perhaps, necessitated by the operations to be effected. The blocks were strong, and the pulleys firm. Cables were attached to this tackle, which, from a distance, looked like mere threads; and beneath this aerial suspension of blocks and timber the huge wreck of the *Durande* seemed suspended in the air by slender bands.

But she was not yet suspended.

Under the cross-beams, eight perpendicular apertures had been

cut in the deck—four on the starboard side and four on the port side of the engines, and eight others underneath them, through the keel. Four cables, descending vertically from four blocks, entered through the holes in the deck, and passed out again by the apertures in the keel underneath the machinery, and re-entered the vessel at the other side, passing upward through the deck, returned to where they had started from, and were secured round the beams. Here a tackle held them fast together, bound to a single cable, capable of being guided by one man's arm. This single cable passed over a hook and through a dead-eye, which kept it in check, and completed the apparatus. This combination enabled the four pulleys to work together, and acted as a complete check upon the suspending powers, forming a kind of dynamical rudder in the hands of the superintendent of the operation, and maintaining every portion in a proper balance. This very ingenious mode of hoisting had some of the simple qualities of the Weston pulley of the present day, united with the ancient polyspasten of Vitruvius. Gilliatt had utilised the idea, though he had never heard of Vitruvius—who died many years back; or Weston—who is alive now. The length of the cables differed according to the unequal slope of the beams, and, by this means, corrected the inequality. The ropes were dangerous, for the white twine with which they were spliced might break; chains would have been better, but then chains would have slipped on the tackle.

The whole arrangement was full of faults, but, as the work of one man, and he all unskilled in such matters, it was simply miraculous. We have been forced to abridge the explanation of the apparatus. Many details have been necessarily omitted which would render the arrangements more clear, perhaps, to experts, but would only prove a source of confusion to others.

The top of the funnel passed between the two middle beams.

Without being aware of what he was doing, Gilliatt had played the part of an unconscious plagiarist, and had, after the lapse of three centuries, reproduced the mechanism of the carpenter of Salbris—a species of mechanism full of errors, and dangerous to the person who directed its operations. Let us remark here, that even the greatest faults in construction do not prevent machinery from working in some sort of a manner or other. It may go clumsily, but it moves and works. The obelisk in the Square of St. Peter's, at Rome, was raised in its position contrary to all the rules of statics. The carriage of the Czar, Peter the Great, was so built that it seemed ready to

overturn at each rotation of the wheels, but, for all that, it went along fairly. What numerous faults there were in the machinery at Marly! Everything almost was wrongly put together. Yet, in spite of that, it at least gave Louis XIV. sufficient water to drink.

Gilliatt had every confidence in his plan, and was so certain of success that he had fixed on his boat, the last time that he paid her a visit, two pairs of iron rings on each side, exactly corresponding to the four rings on board the *Durande* to which the chains of the funnel were fastened. Gilliatt's mind had evidently conceived a very complete and settled plan. Having every chance against him, he felt that the best thing that he could do would be to multiply every precaution. He made several arrangements which seemed unnecessary—a sure sign that he had considered the matter thoroughly. His manner of setting to work would, as we have observed, have puzzled a looker-on, even though familiar with mechanical operations. Any spectator of his labours—one, for instance, who had seen him, with tremendous exertion, and at the risk of breaking his neck, driving in eight or ten of the great nails which he had made, into the bases of the two *Douvres*, at the entrance of the rocky passage, would hardly have comprehended the use to which these nails were to be put, and would most probably have asked why all this trouble was being taken. If, however, he had seen Gilliatt measuring that large portion of the bulwarks which, it will be remembered, adhered to the wreck, then fastening a small cable to the upper edge, then cutting it away with blows of his hatchet from the broken fastenings which still held it in its place, and finally, by the aid of the tide pulling it through the rugged channel, which moved it from below whilst Gilliatt dragged it from above, and, by dint of great labour, fasten with the cable this heavy mass of planks and beams—wider than the entrance of the passage itself—to the spikes driven into the base of the Little *Douvre*, the spectator would have, perhaps, found it even more difficult to comprehend, and might have felt surprise why Gilliatt, if he wanted, for the purpose of carrying on his operations more easily, to clear the channel between the two *Douvres* of all wreckage, had not permitted this huge mass to fall into the sea, and be carried away by the receding tide.

But Gilliatt, probably, had reason for all that he did. In order to fix the nails firmly in the base of the rocks he had taken advantage of every crack and crevice into which he had



first wedged pieces of wood, and into them had then driven the nails. He had had the design of doing some similar work in the two rocks which rose up at the other end of the passage on the eastern side, and put plugs of wood into all the crevices, as though he decided to prepare them for the reception of the iron spikes. But this appeared to be a simple precaution on his part, and, for economy's sake, he could not afford to be too lavish of his material, but only to use it as occasion required. This was an additional hindrance to his toil.

When the first labour was over, another cropped up. Gilliatt passed without hesitation from one to the other, with the stride and strength of a giant.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SUB RE.

THE appearance of the man who had accomplished all these tremendous achievements was terrible to look upon.

Gilliatt, in his arduous toil, exhausted nearly all his strength, and with difficulty regained it. Privations on the one hand, and weariness on the other, had emaciated him very much. His hair and beard had grown long and ragged. He had but one shirt left that was not in tatters. He went about with bare feet, for the wind had carried away one shoe, whilst the sea had made a prey of the other. Splinters from his makeshift anvil had covered his hands and arms with cuts and scratches: these, though not deep, were rendered very painful by the sharpness of the air and the salt water.

He suffered from hunger, cold, and thirst. His can of fresh water was exhausted. His rye-meal had been used or eaten, and he had only a little biscuit remaining, which he had to break with his teeth—all the water, in which he used to steep it, having been used. Little by little, and day by day, his strength decreased.

The terrible rock was draining away his life. Where to get drink was the first question; how to procure food was the second; where to sleep was the third. He eat, when he was able to catch a crayfish or a crab. He drank, when he saw a sea-bird alight on a rock; then he would clamber up to the rook and, perhaps, be rewarded by finding a little fresh water

in some cavity of the rock. He drank after the bird, sometimes even with it; for the gulls and seamews had become accustomed to his appearance, and no longer flew away from him. However hungry he might be, he never attempted to injure them. He had, as it will be remembered, a superstitious feeling regarding the feathered race. The birds, on their side—now that his hair was long and shaggy, and his beard unkempt—had no longer any fear of him. The change in his appearance had inspired them with confidence; they looked upon him no more as a man, but classed him with the wild beasts.

The birds and Gilliatt were now excellent friends. Friends in adversity, they mutually aided each other. As long as any rye-meal remained, he would break up little portions of the cakes he made, and scatter them about for their food, and, in their turn, they guided him to the spots where he could find fresh water. He devoured the shell-fish that he collected raw, as he found that, eaten thus, they in some measure quenched his thirst. As for the crabs, he cooked them; and, having no pot to boil them in, he roasted them between two stones brought to a red heat in his fire, after the fashion of the savage inhabitants of the Feroe Islands. But now the equinoctial season had begun to declare itself, and rain had commenced to fall—a really hostile rain. No showers or heavy falls, but long, sharp, firm, penetrating points, which pierced through his clothes to his skin, and through his skin to his very bones. The rain yielded but little water for drinking purposes, but did not the less drench him completely.

Niggardly in granting assistance, prodigal in heaping misery upon misery, such was this rain—an unkind blow from the sky. During a whole week Gilliatt endured the downpour, night and day. The rain was the greatest cruelty that the firmament could have inflicted on him.

During the night, in his rocky lurking-place, his wearied frame could only enjoy a little slumber from its utter exhaustion. Large gnats which frequent the borders of the sea stung him, and he awoke covered with great blisters.

He suffered from a kind of low fever, which gave him a fictitious strength; this fever, whilst acting as a help, ruins the constitution. By mere instinct he chewed the mosses, or sucked the leaves of the wild cocheleria—a few straggling plants of which grew in the dry crevices of the rocks. He, however, paid but little attention to his sufferings. He could give no time from his work to think of his own privations. He was getting on

well with the rescue of the engines of the *Durande*; that was sufficient for him. Very frequently his work compelled him to plunge into the sea, and, after swimming a short distance, to land again. He simply dropped into the water, and left it, as a man might walk from one room to the other in his house.

His clothes were always wet now. They were soaked in rain-water, which continually remains damp; and salt-water, which never dries up. Gilliatt lived in a constantly drenched condition. But you can habituate yourself to live soaked through. Those poor Irish families—old men, mothers, young girls, only half clad, and little children who pass the winter in the open air, exposed to the rain and snow, all huddled together in the street corners of London—live and die, not knowing what it is to be dry.

To be drenched to the skin, and to suffer all the agonies of thirst, was a strange species of torture to which Gilliatt grew accustomed. At times he sucked the rain-drops from his coat sleeve. The fires which he kindled were hardly sufficient to warm him. Fire in the open air does not impart much warmth; you are roasted on one side and frozen on the other.

Even when Gilliatt was perspiring he shivered. In the midst of a fearful silence, he felt all about him a strong spirit of opposition. He could detect the element of hostility closing around him.

Nature has a melancholy *Non possumus*. The non-activity of nature is like a veiled menace. A cloud of unpleasantness surrounded him. He suffered from burns and shivering; the fire eat into his flesh; the water froze him; thirst threw him into a fever; the wind tore his clothes; hunger gnawed at his vitals. The combination of all these ills brought him down to the lowest depth of exhaustion. Obstacles, terrible in their nature, closed in upon him in silence, apparently irresponsible for the ills that they woe inflicting, but full of a terrible unanimity, and he felt them weigh him down inexorably. He had no means of escaping from them. It was as though he was persecuted by some living being. It was impressed upon Gilliatt's inner consciousness that there was some hidden hatred working against him. He could avoid it by flight, but as he had elected to remain at his post, he must face it out. He had against him an impenetrable hostility; could he not expel it, it would get the better of him? It! What? Who was it? The unknown. It clasped him tightly, pressed him almost to suffocation, and stopped his breath. He was being slowly murdered by the

invisible; each day the mysterious vice gave an extra turn. The situation of Gilliatt, in the midst of all these disquietudes, resembled an unfair duel, in which someone is playing a traitor's part.

The combination of unknown powers environed him. He felt that there was a conspiracy on foot to get rid of him. It is thus that the iceberg chases the wandering block that has been detached from it. With the air of having scarcely touched him, this conspiracy had rent his clothes to tatters, had left him bleeding and in distress, and, so to speak, disabled him before the battle had commenced. He did not cease from his toil, for all these oppositions; but as the work itself progressed, the worker lost ground. It might be said that cruel nature, dreading the bold spirit that he exhibited, had adopted the plan of attacking his bodily powers.

Gilliatt maintained a bold front, and waited. The sea had commenced the attack. Would the sea continue it?

The twin-rocks of the Douvres—those granite dragons ambushed in the open sea—had granted him a shelter. They had permitted him to enter and do as he wished; but their hospitality was that of the wild beast who welcomes the traveller to his den with open jaws.

The desert, the trackless surface, the unfathomable space all around him and over his head, so filled with opposition to the will of man.

The silent, relentless determination of phenomena following the course mapped out for them.

The mighty general laws of nature, implacable and passive, with all their ebbs and flows; the rocks themselves, gloomy Pleiads, whose every point is a star amidst the abysses—a centre of the irradiation of currents; the wind, indescribable, plot to strangle with blighting contempt the rashness of a mortal. The blasts of winter, the clouds, the waves that besieged him and slowly closed around him and imprisoned him, separating him from all companionship, like a dungeon built up stone by stone around a living man. Everything hostile to him—nothing on his side—he felt himself abandoned in solitude, enfeebled, forgotten, and broken down. His stores were gone, his tools broken or defective; he suffered the pangs of hunger and thirst by day, and the freezing cold by night. His sufferings had inflicted upon him wounds, tatters, and rags, under which were painful sores, mangled hands, bleeding feet, emaciated limbs, pallid cheeks, eyes burning with the glance of fever, but in

them, for all that, the fixed light of determination. Magnificent light!—the visible light of will! The eye of man is so constructed that it shows the virtue latent within. The pupil of it tells how much true courage lurks in our system.

All Gilliatt's efforts seemed to tend towards the impossible; success was slow and doubtful, and much had to be spent to attain a slight result, and this it was that imbued the struggle with a nobility and pathos peculiarly its own.

That so many preparations, so much toil, so many careful tentatives, such nights of danger, and such days of hardship should have been necessary in order simply to put up four beams over a wreck, and to sort and place upon one side that portion of it that was worth saving, and to adjust four blocks, with their ropes, was but one of the miseries attendant upon his lonely task.

This lonely task Gilliatt had undertaken; indeed, he had chosen it of his own free will. Dreading an associate—for an associate might have proved a rival—he had undertaken the affair alone. The crushing enterprise, the risk, the danger, the toil which daily increased, the probable destruction of the salvor with his own work of salvage—famine, fever, nakedness, and distress—he had chosen all these for himself! Such was his sublime egotism. He resembled a man confined in a terrible room, from which the air is being gradually pumped out. Vitality was leaving him slowly but surely, and yet he scarcely perceived it. But though bodily strength may fail, the will still remains.

Faith is but a secondary power, subordinate to the superior one of will. The mountains, which are proverbially said to be moved by faith, are as nothing beside the miracles which will can accomplish. All the ground that Gilliatt lost from weakness he regained by fixity of purpose. The wasting away of the physical man under the devouring influence of the wildness of the elements only served to give power and vigour to the moral side of his nature. Gilliatt was sensible of no fatigue, or, to speak more correctly, he would not yield to it. The soul that refuses to yield to the weakness of the body is an immense power in itself.

He could see nothing but the graduated steps in the progress of his task. He was miserable without knowing it. His end, which he had so nearly attained, cloaked him with illusions.

He submitted to all his sufferings with no other thought than that contained in the one word, "Forward!" The intoxication

of his work flew to his head—the strength of the will is a potent drug. Its effects are termed heroism.

Gilliatt had become a kind of ocean Job, but he was a Job that wrestled with difficulties—a Job fighting and keeping a bold front to affliction and distress—a Job determined to conquer. A combination of Job and Prometheus, if such names are not too grand to be applied to a poor fisher of crayfish and crabs.

## CHAPTER V.

### SUB UMBRA.

SOMETIMES during the night Gilliatt awoke and peered out into the darkness.

He felt a strange, indescribable emotion.

His eyes were opened out on to the black night; the situation was a dismal one, and filled his mind with anxiety.

There is even now such a thing as a darkness that can be felt.

A strange roofing of shadow, a deep obscurity which no diver can penetrate—a light mingled with a darkness, which half deadens and shrouds it—a light in infinitesimal atoms, like minute seeds or the fine dust of ashes—millions of tiny lamps possessed of no illuminating power—a diffusion of glittering particles, like sparks of fire driven before the wind, and stopped short in their career—the tumult of the whirlwind mingled with the silence of the tomb—a problem the solution of which must be sought at the foot of the precipice—an enigma, showing and concealing its face—the infinite, with the mask of darkness hiding its lineaments—such is the night. Its oppressive weight lies heavily upon the soul of man.

This conjunction of all mysteries—this cosmic mystery, this unexplained revelation of Fate—crushes down human intellect. The presence of the darkness acts in a different way upon human nature. In the presence of night, man recognises his own incompleteness. He sees the gloom and feels his own weakness. The dark sky is a blind man. Face to face with the night, man bends, kneels, prostrates himself, crouches down, and crawls to some cavity in the earth in which to hide his head, or else vainly seeks for wings. Almost always he tries to fly from the presence of the Unknown. He asks himself what it

is; he trembles, he bends his head before it, and yet sometimes he wishes to go to it.

To go where?

Yonder!

Yonder! Where is that? What is it?

But curiosity upon this point is evidently forbidden, for on this road all the bridges that span the gulf are broken. The arch in the road to the Infinite is gone. But the thirst for forbidden knowledge has a fascination of its own, like the giddy depths of the precipice. Where the foot may not tread, the eye may reach; where sight fails, intellect may attain. There is no man, however feeble his intellectual power may be, who does not make the effort. The seeker after this mystery either pursues or recoils before it, according to his depth of soul. With some natures it enlarges; with others it reduces the intellect. The outlook is gloomy, for the indefinite mingles itself in it.

Should the night be still and cloudless, it is a depth of shadow.

Should it be stormy, it is an ocean of cloud. Its immeasurable depths half reveal themselves to us, and yet mock our eager gaze—close themselves against our explorations, but yet leave themselves open to conjecture. Myriads of points of light only make the darkness beyond yet more gloomy—carbuncles, sparks, stars, existences revealed in unknown worlds; angry defiances to those who venture to approach too near the light—boundaries in the illimitable—landmarks, where all is boundless, where all measurements fail—unfathomable and beyond all human power of measurement. One shining microscopic point, then another and another, it is the imperceptible linked with the gigantic. That light over there is a focus, that focus is a star, that star is a sun, that sun is a universe, and that universe is nothing. In the realm of the infinite every number is a cypher. And yet those worlds, which are nothings, exist, and through them we experience the difference between the now existent and the never-to-be!

The inaccessible adds to the inexplicable, and this is the heavens.

From a contemplation of this mystery arises the sublime phenomenon of the growth of the soul from reverence.

A feeling of awe is the characteristic of man; the beast does not possess it. Intellect discovers in this supreme terror its eclipse and its proof.

Darkness is one—it produces fear ; at the same time it is complex, hence comes dread. Its unity weighs upon our spirit, and takes away all desire to resist it. Its complexity compels us to look upon all sides outside ourselves, as though we were dreading some unexpected animals. We surrender, but, at the same time, we are on our guard. We are in the presence of the Whole, whence comes our submission? of the Many, whence comes our defiance? The unity of darkness contains a multiple—mysterious multiple, visible in matter, sentient to the thought. It causes silence: the more reason to be on our guard.

Night is one of the mysterious enormities of Nature. Bowed down with ties of intense solitude, it weighed heavily upon Gilliatt's brain.

Did he understand it?

No.

Did he feel it?

Yes.

He possessed a wealth of deep, though clouded intellectual power, and a wild and unfettered soul.

## CHAPTER VI.

### GILLIATT PLACES THE BOAT IN READINESS.

THE rescue of the engine which Gilliatt was meditating resembled closely an attempt at an escape from prison ; and we all know what patience and perseverance has been displayed in such achievements, as well as the industry that has been shown in them—industry carried to an almost miraculous pitch—patience to a point of veritable agony. The man Thomas, for example, imprisoned in Mount Saint Michael, found means to conceal a large portion of his dungeon wall in his mattress. Another prisoner at Tulle, in 1820, removed a quantity of lead from the prison roof upon which the prisoners took exercise. Where did he get the knife to remove it? No one could imagine. Melted the lead. With what fire? That remained a mystery. Cast it. In what mould? This question can be answered, In a mould made of bread-crumbs. With this lead and this mould he made a key, and with this key he opened a lock of which he had never seen more than the key-hole. Much of this strange ingenuity was possessed by Gilliatt



He had once scaled and descended the cliff of Boisrosé. He was the Trenck of the wreck, the Latude of the machinery.

The sea, like a gaoler, kept strict watch over him.

Unpleasant and annoying as the rain was, it had been of some benefit to him. He had collected a small quantity of fresh water, but his thirst was insatiable, and he had no sooner filled his can than he emptied it.

One day—the last day of April, or it may have been the first of May—all his preparations were complete. The floor of the engine-room was, as it were, framed by the eight cables of his tackling—four on one side and four on the other. The sixteen openings in the deck and keel through which these cables passed had been made circular by sawing. The planking had been sawed, the timber cut with an axe, the iron work with a file, and the sheathing with a chisel. That part of the keel immediately under the engine was cut away square, and was ready to descend with it, at the same time supporting it. All this terrible swinging mass was only held up by one chain, which was kept in its position by a notch that had been filed in it. At this portion of the operations, when the end was so nearly attained, haste becomes prudence.

It was low tide—a favourable moment at which to commence. Gilliatt had succeeded in removing the axletree of the paddle-wheels, the ends of which might have caught and checked the descent, but he had managed to make this ponderous mass fast in the engine-room. It was time to finish all now. Gilliatt was not worn out—his will kept *him* up—but his tools were. The forge was rapidly becoming useless. The stone anvil was shattered, and the blower no longer worked properly. The small fall of sea-water had left saline deposits in the joints, which prevented its having free play. Gilliatt went to the bay at the foot of the Man-Rock and examined his boat critically, to see that all was in order; he paid especial attention to the four rings placed on the port and starboard sides; then, weighing anchor, he took to the oars and brought his craft right under the Durande. The passage between the rocks was just wide enough to admit his boat, and there was plenty of water. Gilliatt had ascertained this on the day of his arrival. The feat, however, was a difficult one, and required all the delicate precision of a jeweller. The operation was the more delicate that he had to back in stern foremost, so that the mast and rigging of his boat should remain outside the wreck of the Durande. These embarrassments rendered Gilliatt's work

awkward. It was not like entering the bay of the Man-Rock, where a turn of the tiller was sufficient; here it was necessary to push, drag, row, and take soundings all at the same time, and this took him over a quarter of an hour; but at last he succeeded.

In fifteen or twenty minutes the boat was in position underneath the *Durande*, and firmly fixed there by means of two anchors. The strongest of these was placed so as to hold against the most powerful wind—that of the south-west. Then, with the aid of a lever and the capstan, Gilliatt lowered the two boxes containing the paddle-wheels into his boat, which were all ready in the slings. These cases served as ballast. Having got rid of these two boxes, Gilliatt fastened to the hook of the capstan-chain the sling of the regulating tackle gear, which was intended to act as a check upon the pulleys. Owing to the peculiar class of work upon which he was engaged, the very defects of his boat were of service to him. She had no deck; there was therefore more space for her cargo, which he could place in her bottom. Her mast stood well forward—too forward, perhaps, for some uses—so that there was more facility for loading her; and as the mast was outside the wreck, it in no way hindered her exit. His boat was like a great wooden shoe; but on the sea nothing is safer or more trustworthy than a boat of this description.

Whilst thus engaged, Gilliatt perceived that the sea was rising, and glanced around to see from what quarter the wind was blowing.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A SUDDEN DANGER.

THERE was not much wind, but what there was blew from the west—a disagreeable habit which winds have during the equinox. The rising sea differs in its effects upon the *Douvres*, according to the quarter from which the wind is blowing. According to this the waves pour into the passage either from the east or from the west. If the sea comes in at the eastern extremity, it is comparatively gentle, but if through the western, it is always a raging, angry wave. This is because the east wind, blowing across the land, has but little force, whilst that from the west brings with it all the accumulated powers of the

vast Atlantic. The slightest breeze from the west is to be feared. It rolls in vast billows from illimitable space, and hurls an angry sea against the mouth of a channel too narrow to admit it all at once. A sea which rushes through an aperture is always dangerous. Water is like a crowd of people; when the quantity which enters is less than the quantity that desires to effect an entrance, there is a terrible crush in the crowd, and a fierce convulsion in the waves. As long as the west wind blows, however slight the breeze may be, the Douvres are, twice a day, the victims of a violent assault. The sea rises, the tide pours in through the narrow channel, the rocks offer resistance, the channel yields as little passage as it can, and the wave, curbed in its efforts, roars and rebounds violently, and clashes with impotent fury against the rocky sides of the passage; so that, with a light breeze from the west, the Douvres offer a singular spectacle. Outside the reefs all is calm and tranquil, whilst within a violent tempest is lashing the rocks with billows, sending up clouds of foam as they dash against the granite walls. This local agitation can hardly be termed a tempest: it is but a sudden rebellion of the waves, but it is a very terrible one. As for the north and south winds, they take the rock on its flanks, and cause but little surf in the channel. The eastern entrance, it must be borne in mind, was close to the Man-Rock, and the dangerous opening to the west is at the opposite extremity, exactly between the two Douvres. It was in this opening that Gilliatt had anchored his boat under the wreck of the *Durande*.

A catastrophe seemed inevitable. There was certainly not much wind, but yet sufficient to do a great deal of mischief.

Before many hours had elapsed, the sea, which was rising fast, would pour itself through the channel of the Douvres. Its first waves were already breaking on the outer reefs. The swell, fed by the whole of the Atlantic Ocean, would come without storm or tempest, but in one vast, overwhelming wave, bringing with it all the forces collected by it in its course from the shores of America to the coasts of Europe—a distance of two thousand leagues. This wave—one of ocean's gigantic barriers—would rush to the gap and, being caught by the two Douvres, standing like watch-towers at the entrance, or like pillars at the commencement of a defile, swelled by the tide, augmented by resistance, repulsed by the rock, and impelled onwards by the wind, it would strike the granite barriers with a mighty shock, and, with a thousand tossings and tumblings, with all the fury

of a pent-up sea, would rush between the rocks, and, striking the boat and the *Durande*, would most likely shiver them to atoms.

A shield must be prepared to ward off this possibility, and Gilliatt was equal to the occasion. It was necessary to prevent the sea from entering all at once—to obstruct it from striking, without barring it out entirely—to resist it, and, at the same time to yield to it—to hinder the compression of the water in the channel, and to turn the deluge into a simple flood—to extract the violence from the waves, and to soothe them into partial gentleness; and therefore it was necessary to substitute for the barrier that lashed them into rage the barrier which would mitigate their fury. Gilliatt, with all that dexterity which he found so much more efficient than mere brute strength, sprang from rock to rock, like a chamois in its native mountains, or like a monkey in its forest retreat, using the slightest pinnacle or projection as a rest for his feet; leaping into the water; emerging from it again; swimming in the pools; clambering up the rocks with a rope in his mouth and a hammer in his hand, he detached the cable which held the forward bulwark of the *Durande* suspended from and made fast to the base of the Little Douvre, fashioned out of the ends of hawsers some sort of hinges, and, making this huge panel fast to the large nails driven into the rock, caused this vast mass to revolve on its hinges, like the gate of a great sluice, and turned its sides as he would a rudder to the force of the waves; so that one end was against the Great Douvres, whilst the other was firmly secured to the smaller one. Then he contrived, by the same means as he had used before—that is to say, the big nails—to fix it by the same fastenings against the larger rock as he had done against the smaller, and made this enormous mass of woodwork fast against the two entrance pillars; completed its security by a chain hung across it like a sword-belt over a breastplate, and in less than an hour this barrier against the inroads of the sea was finished, and the channel between the rocks closed as by a folding door. This massive apparatus, composed of beams and planks, which, flat on the surface of the sea, would have been a raft, but which, standing up, resembled a wall, had been, the tide assisting him, handled by Gilliatt with all the dexterity of a conjuror.

It might almost be said that the barrier had been set up before the sea had had time to perceive it. It was one of these occasions upon which Jean Bart might have uttered the famous

expression of which he made use every time that he escaped shipwreck—" *The Englishman has been taken in.*" It is a well-known fact that Jean Bart, whenever he wished to insult the sea, called it "*The Englishman.*"

The barrier having been fixed securely, Gilliatt's thoughts turned to the boat. He slackened his cables sufficiently to permit her to rise with the tide — what old sailors called "anchoring with bearings." Gilliatt had not for a moment permitted himself to be taken by surprise; every need had been carefully foreseen. The eye of a sailor could have detected this at once in the two pulleys of the top ropes, cut into the shape of snatch blocks, and fixed in the stern of the boat, through which ran two ropes passing through the rings of the anchors.

The tide was now rising fast; the half-flood had arrived—a time when, even in calm weather, the force of the waves may be considerable. Exactly what Gilliatt expected happened. The waves hurled themselves against the barrier, and broke as they met it; and then, with all their dangerous powers taken from them, rolled underneath it. Outside was the swell; within it was deadened by infiltration. Gilliatt had designed a kind of Caudine Forks, and the vanquished sea rolled peacefully beneath them.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MOVEMENT, BUT LITTLE PROGRESS.

THE long-dreaded moment had at last arrived.

The riddle to be solved was how to place the engine on board the boat.

For some minutes Gilliatt remained buried in thought, holding the elbow of his left arm in his right hand, and his left hand pressed to his forehead. Then he clambered on to the wreck, a portion of which (the engines) was to be removed, and the rest (the hull) was to remain. He severed the four slings which fastened the four chains of the funnel to the port and starboard sides. The slings were only of rope, so that he easily cut them with his knife.

The chains thus set free hung down by the side of the chimney. From the wreck he climbed on to the apparatus that he had constructed, tested the beams with his foot, examined the

blocks, looked at the pulleys, tried the cables, gave an eye to the splicings, and saw that his untarred twine was not soaked through; found that nothing was wanting and everything ready; then, springing from his props on to the deck, he took his post near the capstan, in that part of the *Durande* which was to remain grasped in the clutch of the *Douvres*. This was the post from which he was to commence his labours.

Deeply impressed with his responsibility, but his bosom unaffected by any useless feelings of emotion, he took one last glance at his tackle; then he seized his file, and began to cut the chain which kept the whole mass suspended. The harsh rasping of the file could be heard above the hoarse growl of the sea.

The chain of the capstan, which regulated the gear, was within easy reach of his hand. All of a sudden there was a crash; the chain, half cut through by the file, snapped suddenly, and the whole apparatus began to oscillate. Gilliatt had only just time to spring to the regulating tackle.

The severed chain beat wildly against the side of the rock, the eight cables stretched, and the whole mass, sawn and cut through, tore itself away from the wreck; the entire interior of the *Durande* opened, and the iron flooring of the engine-house appeared through the keel.

Had not Gilliatt so promptly grasped the regulator the whole must have fallen, but his powerful hand was ready at the exact moment, and it descended steadily.

When Jean Bart's brother, Pieter Bart—that powerful and talented drunkard, that poor fisherman of Dunkirk, who spoke so familiarly to the Grand Admiral of France—saved the galley *Langeron* when in distress in Ambleteuse Bay, and, in order to draw the heavy floating mass through the breakers of the raging bay, he reefed the mainsail with marine reeds, trusting that they would break away at the right moment and give the sail to the winds. He trusted to this rupture, as Gilliatt had trusted to the chains breaking at the right moment, and the strange mishap was crowned with equal success on both occasions.

The regulator in Gilliatt's hands acted admirably. Its function, as it will be remembered, was to put a check upon the powers of the apparatus, thus reduced from many to one, and to bring them all into united operation. It had somewhat similar properties to the bridle of a bowline, except that, instead of being used to trim a sail, its duties were to keep due equilibrium in some complicated mechanism.

Gilliatt, standing erect by the capstan, had, we may say, his finger on the pulse of the machine.

It was here that his inventive genius burst forth.

A remarkable coincidence of forces was the result.

Whilst the engine of the *Durande* was descending in a solid mass towards the boat, the boat rose slowly to receive it—the wreck and the boat that came to its aid assisting each other by opposite movements, and, meeting each other half way, spared themselves half the labour.

The tide, rising between the *Douvres*, raised the boat, and brought it closer to the *Durando*. The sea was more than conquered—it was tamed, and took its part in the work.

The waters, as they mounted, lifted the boat gently, taking as much care of it as if it had been made of porcelain.

Gilliatt combined and proportioned the two labours—that of the water and that of the apparatus.

Like some impressive statue holding sway over all around it, he regulated the gradualness of the descent by the rate of the ascension.

There was no jerk from the waves, no slip in the tackle—it was a strange confederacy of all kinds of forces united together and tamed. On the one side was gravitation lowering the engine, on the other the sea raising the boat towards it. The attraction of the heavenly bodies, which causes the tide, and the attraction of the earth, which we call weight, seemed to unite and to serve Gilliatt as faithful slaves. Their submission knew neither stop or stay, and, under the control of a commanding spirit, these passive powers became active auxiliaries. Every minute the work progressed, and the interval between the wreck and the boat perceptibly diminished. The conjunction was effected in silence and, as it were, in a sort of terror of the man who was standing there directing it all. The element had received an order, and was preparing to execute it.

As the tide ceased to rise the cables ceased to unwind. Suddenly, but without commotion, the pulleys ceased to work and the block stopped.

The engine, as though lowered by a powerful hand, had taken its place in the boat. It stood there, straight, upright, firm, and immoveable. The iron flooring remained with its four corners resting evenly in the bottom of the boat.

It was all over!

Gilliatt gazed at it, wondering at his own success.

The poor fellow was not spoilt by joy. He was bowed by the

weight of his intense happiness. He felt his limbs bend beneath him, and, in his hour of triumph, the man, whom no danger had been able to daunt, began to tremble.

He gazed at the boat beneath the wreck, and at the engine in the boat. He could hardly believe in it now. It seemed as if he had never believed in ultimate success. A miracle had been performed by him, and he looked on the result with astonishment.

This bewilderment did not last long. Like a man who starts from a dream, he rushed to his saw and cut the eight cables; then, separated from the boat, owing to the rising tide, by only ten feet, he jumped into it, and, taking a bundle of thin rope, made four slings, which he passed through the rings prepared beforehand, and fastened on each side of his boat the four chains of the funnel, which an hour before had been firmly fixed on board the *Durande*.

The funnel once secured, he disengaged the upper part of the machinery. A square portion of the planking of the *Durande* still adhered to it. Gilliatt took out the nails and released the boat from this encumbrance of planks and joists, throwing them upon the rocks on one side. This lightening of his boat was a sensible improvement.

His boat remained steady under the weight of the engines, as he had expected that it would do; she only sank to a fair water-line. The *Durande's* engine, though weighty, was not so heavy as the rocks and the gun which he had brought from the Isle of Herm on the day of the regatta.

His work was over; nothing remained for him but to return to Guernsey.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A VICTORY LOST AS SOON AS GAINED.

BUT all was not yet finished.

To reopen the channel closed by his makeshift sluice-gate—to take his boat out of the rock—was clearly the first thing to be done. At sea every moment is precious. Hardly a breath of wind, scarcely a ripple on the waters—a lovely evening, which gave promise of a fine night. The sea perfectly calm, but the reflux beginning to be felt, it was indeed the very hour for leaving the reef. The falling tide would take him out of the Douvres, and he would have the benefit of the rising tide for



his return to Guernsey. He ought to be at Saint Pierre Port by the break of day.

But an unexpected obstacle presented itself. Gilliatt had allowed one thing to escape his foresight. The engines were free, but the funnel was still a prisoner.

The sea in lifting up the boat to the wreck, whilst it lessened the dangers of the descent, and assisted the removal of the engines, had left the top of the funnel in the square opening in the yawning hull of the *Durande*. It was imprisoned there as safely as between four walls. This trick upon the part of the waves complicated the matter. It appeared as if the sea, forced to obey Gilliatt, had at the last moment had a second thought. It is true that what the ebb-tide had done, the flood would undo. The chimney, some eighteen feet in height, had nearly eight feet in the interior of the *Durande*, and the sea would fall nearly twelve feet, so that as the boat sank lower there would be plenty of room for the chimney to be easily disengaged from the wreck.

But how long would this take?

Six hours.

In six hours it would be nearly midnight. How could he venture out at such an hour? How could he follow the channel through the breakers in the dark, when it was even difficult to do so by the light of day; and how dare he risk the open sea, so full of treacherous shoals, in the dark and gloom of the night? If he were forced to wait until the next day, those six lost hours would make him lose at least twelve. He could not even think of abridging his labours by reopening the mouth of the passage; the barrier would be necessary for the approaching tide.

There was nothing for it but to wait.

To sit down and rest was the only thing that Gilliatt had not done since he had taken up his abode on the rock.

This enforced repose irritated and annoyed him almost as much as if it had been brought about by his own fault. He muttered to himself "What would *Déruchette* say, if she saw me idling like this?"

But, perhaps, after all, a little repose was necessary. His boat was now at his disposal, and he determined to pass the night in her. He ascended the Great *Douve* and brought back his sheepskin, supped on a few shellfish, and, feeling very thirsty, drank the few last mouthfuls of water that remained in the bottom of his can; wrapped himself up in his sheepskin,

the wool of which gave him a pleasurable sensation, and, crouching down like a watch-dog beside the engine, drew his cap over his brows and fell asleep. He slept soundly. After such toil men sleep well.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE WARNING OF THE SEA.

In the middle of the night he woke up abruptly, as though moved by some hidden spring.

He opened his eyes.

The Douvres, high above his head, were lighted up by a bright white light. On the dark face of the rock there was a reflection like that of a mighty conflagration.

From whence did this fire come?

From the water.

The sea was a wondrous sight.

It seemed a mass of flame. As far as the eye could stretch—on the rock and beyond it—the sea was filled with fire. This blaze had nothing of the red glare of volcanoes or furnaces; no sparkling, no heat, no purple edging, and no noise. Ghostly trails of a bluish tint looked like the folds of a winding sheet.

A pale, dull light shimmered on the wave. It was the spectre of a fire more than a fire itself. It resembled the hideous illumination of the inside of a sepulchre by the light of an unearthly dream.

It seemed as though darkness was struggling with fire that wished to consume it.

The night—the vast, wide-spreading night—appeared to form the fuel of this pale flame. It was a weird illumination, issuing out of darkness. Shadow was one of the component parts of this spectral light.

The Channel sailors thoroughly understand all these phosphorescences, so full of warning to the mariner. These appearances are not extraordinary in the Grand V, near Isigny.

In this light all things lose their individuality. A spectral glimmer renders them transparent; rocks become mere outlines; cables and anchors look like bars of iron brought to a white heat. The fisherman's net, seen beneath the wave, resembles

welded links of fire. Half the oar is ebony; the other, as it dips into the water, resembles solid silver. As the drops of water fall from it they seem to sow the wave with silvery stars. The wake of each vessel looks like a comet. The sailors, drenched with the spray, appear like men on fire. Plunge your hand beneath the surface, and you draw it forth with a glove of fire on it. But the flame is dead, and does not burn. Your arm becomes a firebrand. You see the strange creatures of the sea rolling about as though in liquid fire. The foam is a cloud of sparks. Fish are tongues of flame, or morsels of lightning darting through pallid depths.

This strange light had made its way through Gilliatt's eyelids; it was this that had aroused him from his sleep.

His waking was opportune.

The tide had fallen, and another had begun to rise. The funnel of the engine, which had been released from its prison during Gilliatt's sleep, was about once more to be seized by the yawning cavity above it.

It was rising slowly; a foot more would have been sufficient to imprison it again. The tide rises a foot in half-an-hour: Gilliatt had therefore half-an-hour before him to effect its deliverance.

He sprang up with a bound, yet, urgent as was the necessity for immediate action, he could not refrain from contemplating the phosphorescence of the ocean, and meditating upon it.

Gilliatt knew the sea by heart. Although he had often suffered from her, yet for many years she had been his companion. That mysterious creature called the ocean had nothing in her most secret depths which he could not divine. By dint of observation, and from the solitary life he led, Gilliatt had become skilled in all her changes; he was what is called weather-wise. He ran to the top-ropes and payed out some cable, and then, when she was no longer restrained by the anchors, he seized the boat-hook, and, pressing sharply against the walls of the passage, pushed the boat some fathoms from the wreck, and closer to his recently-formed barrier. In ten minutes the boat was withdrawn from beneath the shattered hull of the *Durande*; no more fear now of the funnel being caught again. The tide might rise as fast as it liked; but, for all that, Gilliatt made no preparations for leaving the rock. He glanced once more at the phosphorescent waters, then he weighed the anchors; but it was only to let them go again and moor the boat more securely than ever nearer to the entrance to the passage.

The light in the sea, which he had been observing so intently, was threatening, but it had done him good service. Had it not been for its appearance he would still have been asleep, and the dupe of the night. It had aroused him, and made objects round him visible. It shed an ill-omened light over the rock. But these gleams, threatening as they appeared to Gilliatt, had this much use in them: that they had rendered the coming change visible, and enabled him to take his precautions; and now, whenever he wished to set sail, his boat, upon which was the engine, was at liberty.

Only Gilliatt seemed less and less inclined to take his departure. His boat safely anchored, he sought for a chain, the strongest that he had in his storehouse, and fastened it to the nails driven into the Douvres; he strengthened it inside with a rampart of planks and joists, already protected by another double chain. Far from opening the exit, he barred it more securely.

The phosphorescent light enabled him to work, but it was dying away, and the dawn was drawing near.

Suddenly, Gilliat stood still and listened.

## CHAPTER XI.

### HAIL TO THE LISTENER !

HE fancied that he heard a faint and indistinct murmur coming towards him across the wide expanse of ocean. These sounds issue at certain hours from the bosom of the mighty depths.

He listened eagerly. The distant sound began once more. Gilliatt shook his head; he knew too well what it meant. In another moment he was at the eastern entrance, which, until then, had been left open, and, with powerful strokes of his hammer, he was hastily driving spike nails into the crevices of the granite, forming the sides of the passage leading to the Man-Rock as he had before done in the one between the Douvres. The fissures in these rocks had been already prepared and wedged with heart of oak. This side of the rock was much weather-beaten, and there were many cavities in it, and Gilliatt was able to fix more nails than he had been able to do in the base of the Douvres.

As if a signal had been given, the phosphorescent light was suddenly extinguished, and the dawn, becoming every moment brighter, replaced it.

The nails once fixed, Gilliatt dragged thither beams, ends, and chains, and, without for a moment relaxing his efforts, began to construct, across the channel leading to the Man-Rock, with beams placed horizontally and secured by cables, one of those barriers which the science of to-day has adopted and called a breakwater. Those who have witnessed, at Rocquaine, in Guernsey, or at Bourg-d'eau, in France, the effect produced by some stakes planted in the rocks, will readily comprehend the advantages of these simple preparations. The breakwater is a combination of what is known in France as an *épi*, and in England as a *dick*. Breakwaters are the *chevaux de frise* of fortifications against the tempest. It is no use fighting against the sea, unless you take advantage of the divisibility of its power.

But the sun had risen bright and pure, the heaven was clear, and the sea calm.

Gilliatt hurried in his work; he was calm, too, but, in his haste, there was a tinge of anxiety. He jumped from rock to rock, from the breakwater to the store, and back again to the breakwater, dragging with him sometimes a rider and sometimes a binding stake. The reason for his having stowed away all these timbers was now apparent. He had done so in anticipation of a danger which was now imminent. A strong iron bar served as a lever to move the heavy timbers with. The work was executed with such rapidity that it rather resembled a growth than a construction. He who has not witnessed the formation of a military pontoon can have no idea of the celerity with which such works can be effected.

The eastern channel is narrower than the western one, and had an entrance of only five or six feet.

The smallness of the aperture was of much service to Gilliatt, as the space to close and fortify was so much less; the breakwater here would therefore be stronger and much more simple. Horizontal beams were therefore sufficient, the upright ones being useless.

The front timbers of the breakwater being placed, Gilliatt climbed upon it and listened.

The low murmur had more meaning in it now. Gilliatt continued his work. He supported it with the Durande's cat-heads, bound to an outer line of beams by ropes passed through pulleys. He secured the whole with chains.

The entire apparatus was little more than a gigantic hurdle, having beams for stakes and chains instead of wattles.

It seemed plaited together, not built.

He increased the fastenings, and put in nails where they were required; for, having secured a large quantity of bar-iron in the wreck, he had been enabled to manufacture a great store of nails.

Whilst he was working, he eat biscuit. He was very thirsty, but he had drained his can of its last drop of water at supper the night before.

He put in four or five more pieces of timber, then, once more mounting the barricade, he listened. The sounds in the distant horizon had ceased—all was silent. The sea was calm and beautiful, meriting all those complimentary epithets which landsmen address to her when she behaves well to them—"a mirror," "a lake," "smooth as oil," "calm as a sheep," and many others. The deep blue of the heavens contrasted with the deep green of the sea; the sapphire of the one could envy the emerald of the other. Neither had the advantage. Not a cloud in the heavens, not a streak of foam on the sea, and above them shone the glorious sun of April. It was impossible to hope for a more lovely day.

In the distant horizon could be seen a long black line of birds of passage. Their flight appeared to be a hurried one, and they were making direct for the land.

Gilliatt returned to his work on the breakwater. He raised it as high as he could—as high as the curved sides of the rock would permit. Towards midday the sun seemed hotter than it should have been for the time of year. Midday is the critical period of the twenty-four hours, and Gilliatt, standing upon the powerful framework which he had erected, looked long and fixedly at the ocean.

The sea was more than calm; it seemed absolutely stagnant. Not a sail was to be seen. The sky was still limpid, only it had changed from blue to white. This white had a strange look. On the western horizon there was a slight ominous patch of cloud. This remained in the same place, but seemed gradually to spread and to increase in size. Near the breakers the waves began to shudder, but very gently.

Gilliatt had done well to erect his breakwaters. There was going to be a storm.

The elements had decided not to surrender their prey without a struggle.

## BOOK III.

## THE STRUGGLE.

## CHAPTER I.

## EXTREMES MEET.

Nothing is more threatening than a late equinox. A strange phenomenon then occurs in the sea, which is called the arrival of the ocean winds.

In all seasons—particularly at the period of the Syzygies, at the moment when it is least to be expected—a sudden calmness manifests itself on the sea. Its vast eternal movement ceases. It seems to have grown weary and fallen into a kind of languor, and longs for rest. Every atom of bunting—from the humble streamer of the fisherman's boat to the ensign of the man-of-war—hang motionless from the masts. The Admiral's pennant and the Royal and Imperial banners all sleep. All of a sudden they begin to flutter gently.

The moment has come, if there be clouds in the sky, to watch for the formation of the *cirri*; if it is the hour of sunset, to look for redness in the western horizon; if it is night, to examine the halo round the moon.

This is the time for the captain or the commander of the squadron, if he is fortunate enough to possess one of those storm-glasses—the inventor of which is unknown—to examine the instrument and to take his precautions against the south wind, if the mixture in the glass resembles crushed sugar; against the north wind, if it exfoliates in crystallizations like brakes, or brambles, or fircones. Then, too, the poor Irish or Breton fisherman, after having consulted some mysterious gnomon, with figures upon it, engraved by the Romans, or, perhaps, by the evil spirits—one of those straight enigmatical stones, called in Brittany a Menhir, and in Ireland a Cruach—hauls up his boat upon the shore.

Meanwhile, the calmness both of sea and sky continue.

Then the day breaks radiantly, and Nature smiles. It was this that filled the writers and prophets of ancient times with

religious horror, for men then exclaimed against the falseness of the sun. *Solem quis dicere falsum audeat?*

The gloomy vision of latent possibility is denied to man by the fatal opacity of existing circumstances. Nothing is more to be dreaded and distrusted than the mask with which the ocean conceals her intending convulsions.

The French proverb says: "*Anguille sous roche*;" it should say, "A storm beneath a calm."

Some hours, and sometimes days, pass thus. Pilots direct their telescopes hither and thither. The features of old sailors harden into severity, arising from the secret rage that consumes them, as they look for fresh changes.

Suddenly, a loud, confused murmur is heard, like a mysterious dialogue carried on in the air. Nothing is to be seen.

The wide expanse remains impassible.

But yet the sound increases, and grows louder and louder, whilst the dialogue becomes more accentuated.

There is something beyond the horizon.

Something terrible: it is the wind.

The wind, or rather that crowd of Titanic monsters that we call gales.

The enormous multitude of the realms of shadow.

The Indians call them the Marouts; the Jews as the Kéroubims; the Greeks as the Aquilons. These are the invincible winged birds of prey of the Infinite; and these winds are rushing upon us.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE WINDS OF THE OCEAN.

WHENCE do they come? From the fathomless depths. Their gigantic pinions require the breadth of the gulfs of ocean, their wide-spreading wings require the illimitable distances of the solitudes of the desert. Those wide-extending plains of blue—the Atlantic and the Pacific—are their favourite resorts. They collect there in troops. Commander Page once saw seven water-spouts at once in the open sea. They are there in all their native ferocity. They plot over the disasters that they will cause. Their business is to watch over the eternal ebb and flow of the tides. We are ignorant how far their powers can go; we



know not what are their desires. They are the sphynxes of the abyss, and Vasco de Gama was their Œdipus. In the gloom of that wide and ever-moving expanse they appear with their features draped in clouds. He who catches a glimpse of their livid lineaments in that wide dispersion, which is the horizon of the sea, feels himself in the presence of an invincible force. It might be said that human intelligence caused them uneasiness, and that they rebelled against it. The mind of man is not to be conquered, but the elements sometimes prove the stronger. What can be done against a power that is ubiquitous, and which cannot be grasped? The gentle breeze swells up until it smites as with a mace, and then lulls down to gentleness once more. The winds begin the battle by violence and tumult, and defend themselves by dying away into space. To meet them, strategy must be used. These varied orders of battle and swiftly-repeated blows disconcert the most courageous. They are as often retreating as advancing. They are impalpably tenacious. Who can oppose them? The prow of the ship *Argo*, carved from one of Dodona's oaks, at once prow and pilot, has addressed them, and they have insulted that pilot goddess. Christopher Columbus, perceiving them approaching the *Pinta*, mounted the poop, and addressed them in verses from the Gospel of Saint John. Surcouf insulted them: "Here come the gang!" he would exclaim. Napier discharged his guns at them. They have seized on the Dictatorship of Chaos, and chaos is theirs entirely, and by it they wreak their mysterious vengeance. The den of the winds is more terrible than the den of lions. How many corpses are lying in those deep abysses, by which the bitter, pitiless winds pass with angry howls? We hear them wherever they go, but they listen to no one. Every deed of theirs is a crime. None know upon whom they have placed their angry hands, flecked with the foam of the surf. What impious ferocity do they exhibit in shipwrecks! What insults to Providence! They have, at times, the air of hurling their foam against the Creator. They are the tyrants of unknown regions "*Luoghi spaventosi*," murmur the mariners of Venice.

These trembling fields of space are subjected to their savage violence. Things impossible to be described, go on in these unknown regions. Some one on horseback rides through the gloom; air is full of forest sounds; nothing can be seen, but the tramp of cavalry is heard. It is midday; suddenly it changes to night; a hurricane comes, and midnight changes to day. The

Polar Lights are shining. Whirlwinds pass in inverse ways, and in a sort of hideous dance, a kind of stamping of a plague on the water. An over-burdened cloud opens and falls on the sea. Other clouds, with red light, flash and roar, then frown again angrily. The cloud, once emptied of its lightnings, grows black, like an extinguished coal. Sacks of rain dissolve into mist. There is a furnace, upon which it rains; here are waves from which the flames issue. The white gleam of the sea beneath the falling rain is reflected far and wide. In the inaccessible darkness great sheaves of shadow quiver. Occasionally there is a convulsion. Rumour becomes tumult, as the wave becomes surf. The horizon—a series of confused layers of cloud—oscillates continuously, and murmurs in a low tone. Strange outbursts disturb the monotony. You can almost believe that you can hear the sneezing of hydras. Cold and hot blasts succeed each other alternately. The quivering of the sea announces a coming terror for which all are waiting in quietude, agony, and terror from the depths of the waters. Suddenly, the hurricane descends upon the ocean, like a wild beast seeking to drink. A strange draught. The sea rises to the invisible mouth; a waterspout is formed. In the presence of the waterspout the thunder itself is silent.

Such are these terrible regions.

Water is supple because it is incompressible. It slips from your grasp without an effort of its own. Forced into a corner on one side, it escapes on the other. It is thus that the water becomes the wave, and the billows are a sign of its freedom.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE REASON OF THE NOISE HEARD BY GILLIATT.

THE winds generally descend upon the earth at the time of the equinox. At this time, the equilibrium of the poles and tropics are in the balance, and the colossal atmospheric tides pour their flow upon one hemisphere, and their ebb upon another. There are two signs of the Zodiac which rule these matters—Libra and Aquarius.

It is the season for storms.

The sea bides their coming in silence.

Sometimes the sky has an evil look—it is pallid, and a thick dark veil obscures its face. Sailors look with uneasiness at the angry aspect of the clouds.

But it is its air of tranquillity that alarms them the most. A smiling sky in the equinox is a tempest in silk and velvet. It is skies like this that have filled the "Tower of Weeping Women," at Amsterdam, with mothers, wives, and daughters, eagerly examining the distant horizon.

When the vernal or autumnal storms delay their advent, it is because they are collecting their forces, and amassing their fury for destruction. Beware of the tempest that has been long in coming. Angot says: "The sea pays its old debts." Though the delay may be a long one, the sea only exhibits her impatience by a more profound calm; only the magnetic influence is shown by the fiery appearance of the sea. Fire issues from the waves, electric air produces phosphoric water. The sailors experience a strange feeling of languor. These seasons are very dangerous for ironships, as they are particularly liable to variations of the compass. The Transatlantic steamer, Iowa, was lost in this manner. To those who are acquainted with the sea, its aspect at this time is very strange. It seems to be longing for and yet afraid of the coming cyclone. Certain nuptials, though strongly urged by nature, are received in the same fashion. The lioness, in her moments of passion, flies before the lion. The sea also has its passions, hence its state of trembling expectancy. The gigantic union is in course of preparation. This marriage, like those of the Roman emperors, is celebrated by human sacrifices. The *fête* is accompanied with disasters.

And now, from the far-off depths, from the unapproachable latitudes, from the gloomy region of solitude, from the boundless realms of the free ocean, the winds pour in.

Pay attention, for this is the equinox!

A storm is being plotted. In the old legends of heathen mythology, these entities were recognised indistinctly moving on the mighty stage of nature. Eolus conspired with Boreas. In order to divide their tasks equally, element allies itself with element. One has to give power to the wave, the cloud, and the stream. The night, too, is a confederate, and must be employed. There are compasses to falsify, beacons to be extinguished, lighthouses to be obscured, and stars to be hidden. The sea must co-operate. A dull murmur precedes every storm. Far away, beyond the horizon, the hurricane whispers its last

commands before it sets forth. This is the noise that is heard afar off in the darkness, amidst the startled silence of the sea.

It was this dreaded whisper which had reached the ears of Gilliatt. The phosphorescence of the sea had been his first warning, the low, dull murmur the second.

If the demon Legion exists, he can be no other than the wind.

The wind is complex, but the air is one; and so it follows that all storms are compounds—a principle that results from the unity of the air. Both heaven and the sea, in all their entirety, take part in the storm. All these powers are mustered for the battle. A wave, is a gust below; a gust, is a wave on high. To be caught in a whirlwind is to be in the hands of both sea and sky. Menier, who is a great marine authority, the pensive astronomer of the little cottage of Cluny, said: "The wind of everywhere is everywhere." He did not believe in winds being confined, even in narrow seas. In his idea there were no such things as midstream winds. He declared that he could recognise a wind as it wandered about the house.

The wind is ubiquity itself.

We do not say for a moment that winds are not more prevalent in certain regions than in others. Nothing is more sure than that continuous air-currents do exist, and that one day aerial navigation will be carried out by those aerial vessels which, in our fondness for compound Greek words, we call *aéroscaques*, thus utilising the currents of the winds.

The canalisation of the air by the wind cannot for a moment be denied. There are rivers of wind, streams of wind, and brooks of wind, only their branches are the reverse of the branches of water; it is brooks that arise from streams, and streams from rivers, instead of falling into them as they do on land; and instead of concentrating, they disperse. This dispersion composes the solidarity of the winds and the unity of the atmosphere. The displacement of one particle of matter results in the displacement of another. All winds move together. To these profound causes of amalgamation must be added the irregular surface of the globe, whose lofty mountains pierce the firmament, causing the winds to twist and turn and deviate from their course, and determining the course of counter-currents and unbanded radiation.

The phenomena of the wind is caused by the oscillation of two oceans one upon the other—the ocean of air upon the ocean of water, resting on these currents, and thus acquiring a sort of trembling motion.

The indivisible is not divided into compartments. No partition separates wave from wave. The Channel Islands feel the blast from the Cape of Good Hope. Universal navigation contends everywhere with the same monster. The sea is a hydra. The waves cover the sea as scales cover a fish. Ocean is Ceto.

Under that unity reposes infinite variety.

## CHAPTER IV.

### TURBA TURMA.

THE compass tells us that there are thirty-two winds—that is to say, thirty-two points; but these points may be divided indefinitely. Classed by its direction, the wind is incalculable; classed by its kinds, it is infinite. Homer himself would have shrunk from the task of enumerating them.

The Polar current encounters the tropical current—cold and heat are thus combined. The waves of the wind issue forth, and are swollen up, dispersed, and shattered in all directions in fierce streams. The dispersion of the winds to the four corners of the horizon causes a terrible disturbance.

Every wind which blows is collected there. The wind of the Gulf Stream, which disgorges the fogs of Newfoundland; the wind of Peru—that silent land, where thunder is never heard; the wind of Nova Scotia; the whirlwinds of Fer, in the China seas; the wind of Mozambique, which destroys canoes and junks; the electric wind of Japan, whose coming is announced by strokes on a gong; the wind of Africa, which dwells between Table Mountain and the Mountain of the Devil; the wind of the equator, which passes over the trade winds, describing a parabola, whose point is always to the west; the Plutonian wind which issues from craters; the singular fiery blast, which bursts from the volcano Awa, and occasions a perpetual olive-tinted cloud in the north; the monsoon of Java, against whose ravages the inhabitants build fortifications, which they call hurricane houses; the wind that the English call the Bush Wind. The Pampero in Chili, and the Rebojo at Buenos Ayres, which bears away the gigantic condor to the sea, and saves him from the lurking-place, where the Indian, bow and arrow in hand, is waiting for him; the chemical wind, which, according to

Lemery, produces thunderbolts from the clouds; the Harmattan of the Kaffirs; the Polar snow-driver, which attaches itself to the icebergs; the wind of the Gulf of Bengal, which reaches to Nijini-Novogorod, in which is held the great Asian fair; the wind of the Cordilleras, which makes the woods and forests quiver; the wind of the Australian Archipelago, where the hunters take the honey of the wild bees, hidden under the forked branches of the giant eucalyptus, the sirocco, the mistral, the hurricane, the dry winds, the inundating, the diluvian, and the torrid winds, which scatter dust on the plains of Brazil and over the streets of Genoa; which both obey and revolt against diurnal rotation, and of which Herrera said: "*Malo viento torrea contra el sol.*" Those winds which work together, conspiring to do mischief—one undoing the work of the other—those old winds which attacked Columbus, and nearly prevented Magellan's approach to the Pacific; and those which dismasted Philip II.'s Armada. Then there are the winds that bring frogs, locusts, and living things across the sea, and a thousand other different varieties, whose names and qualities it would be impossible to enumerate. The Douvres, as Gilliatt was building his breakers, heard the distant gallop of their approach.

we have said, one wind means the combination of all the others.

All this army was coming.

Upon one side there was a legion in battle array

Upon the other there was only Gilliatt.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE ALTERNATIVES OF GILLIATT.

THESE mysterious powers had chosen their time well.

Chance, if it exerts itself, is skilful.

As long as the boat had been moored in the little bay, near the Man-Rock, and as long as the machinery had been secure in the wreck, the position of Gilliatt was impregnable.

The boat was safe, and the machinery beyond the reach of danger. The Douvres, which held the engine in its grasp, had certainly condemned it to a lingering destruction, but protected it against sudden accidents. In any case, had the engine been destroyed, Gilliatt would have escaped uninjured, for he had still his boat as a means of retreat.

But to wait until his boat had been removed from its anchorage where she could not have been harmed, and to allow her to be moored in the passage of the Douvres; to watch until she was entangled amongst the rocks, and to allow Gilliatt to carry out all his operations for the rescue of the engine, and to put it safely on board his barque, and even to lend a helping hand to his success, was but a trap that the elements had laid for him. Now, for the first time, he began to see, in all its sinister nature, the trick that the ocean had been for so long a time preparing to play him.

The engine, the boat, and her owner, were all three in the passage between the rocks.

These formed one point of attack.

To direct their attack upon one point was easy; and to shatter the boat, sink the engine, and drown Gilliatt, could all be done at once and at the same moment. No situation could have been more critical than that of Gilliatt.

The sphynx, which dreamers believe is concealed behind a cloud, seemed to have placed him on the horns of a dilemma.

"Go, or stay?"

To go was madness; to stay was simply terrible!

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE COMBAT.

GILLIATT climbed to the summit of the Great Douvres. From thence he could cast his eye over the wide ocean.

The appearance on the western side was appalling. A vast wall seemed to have been erected—a wall of cloud, barring the mighty expanse from side to side, and rising from the horizon to the zenith. This wall, ascending with a perfectly straight surface, without a crack or a crevice in it, seemed to have been built with the aid of the square and the plumb-line. It looked more like a granite cliff than a cloud. The precipitous face of the cloud was perfectly straight at the southern extremity, but, towards the north, curved a little, like a bent sheet of iron, and showed the slippery face of an inclined plane. This dark bank of cloud grew and increased, but its entablature was always on a level with the line of the horizon, which was becoming indistinct in the approaching darkness. Silently, and foot by foot, this airy fabric ascended. Not an undulation, not a wrinkle,

not a projection broke its uniform appearance. This immovability in motion presented a strange, weird appearance. The pallid scene, in the midst of a sickly transparency, illumined this feature of the *Apocalypse*. The cloud had now invaded the greater portion of the open space, shelving like the fearful slope of the abyss.

It seemed as though some mighty, shadowy mountain was rising between earth and sky. It was nightfall at midday.

There was a suffocating heat, like that coming from an open furnace door—a fiery blast, that seemed to proceed from that strange chaotic mass. The sky had changed from blue to white, and from white had become grey, looking like an immense slate. Not a breath of air in the sky, not a wave in the sea, not a sound. The sea was dull-looking and leaden-hued. Far as the eye could stretch the sea was deserted. Not a sail was in sight. The birds had all fled. In the infinite it seemed as though some terrible act of treason was being plotted. The growth of the monstrous mass increased perceptibly. The enormous bank of cloud, which was advancing upon the Douvres was one of those that may be termed a battle-cloud. A sinister mass of vapour, through whose apertures furtive glances seemed to be cast on the spectator.

This slow and regular advance was terrible.

Gilliatt fixed his eyes steadily on the cloud and muttered between his teeth: "I was thirsty, but you will give me enough to drink in all conscience." He remained for a few moments, his eyes riveted on the cloud; it appeared as if he were taking stock of the approaching storm. His cap was in the pocket of his jacket; he took it out, and placed it on his head. From the cavity of the rock, in which they had lain so long unheeded, he took out and put on his oilskin-coat and his overalls, as a knight buckles on his armour for the fray. We have said that he had lost his shoes, but his feet had grown accustomed to the rocks.

Thus prepared for the combat, he took a glance at his breakwaters, grasped the knotted cord, descended briskly from the top of the rock, and hastened to his storehouse. In another moment he was hard at work. The immense, silent cloud could hear the strokes of his hammer. What was he doing? With the nails, rope, and beams that remained he was constructing a second framework, which he placed some ten or twelve feet in rear of the first one, at the eastern entrance to the channel. There was deep silence all around; the tufts of grass in the crevices of the rock did not even move their heads.



Suddenly the sun disappeared, and Gilliatt raised his eyes.

The cloud had reached the sun; there was an immediate extinction of the day, replaced by a composite, pallid hue.

The wall of cloud had altered its aspect; it no longer maintained its unity. It had bent over on attaining the zenith, from whence it spread over the remainder of the sky. It had run various stages. The formation of the tempest was visible, like strata of the earth in a cutting, and it was possible to distinguish the layers of rain from the beds of hail. There was no lighting, but a horrible diffused glare—for even light itself may be horrible. The smothered respiration of the storm could be heard. Silence palpitated dully. Gilliatt, too, was silent, and watched the masses of vapour above his head shaping themselves into pent-up heaps of cloud. A long band of ashen hue laid heavily, every now and then lengthening itself out on the horizon, and on the zenith was a similar band, but of lead-colour. Livid, ragged atoms of cloud hung down from the sky to the mist below. The bank of cloud that formed the background was pallid, milky-looking, terrible, gloomy, and indescribable. A thin, white cloud, coming from no visible source, cut the high, dark wall obliquely from north to south.

One of its extremities hung down into the sea. At the spot where it touched the waves a dense red vapour was discernible through the darkness. Below this long, pale cloud were a number of smaller ones, very dark in colour, and hanging low in the heavens, flying aimlessly about, as if they knew not in what direction to turn. The enormous cloud at the back increased rapidly, and continued to eclipse the sun, wrapping it in its gloomy embrace. In the east, behind Gilliatt, there was only one small, clear space, and that was rapidly closing up. Though there was no wind, a strange flight of grey, downy atoms flew by, as if some gigantic bird was pluming itself behind the enormous bank of cloud. A close, dark ceiling had formed, which touched the sea at the horizon, and melted away into the darkness. There was a feeling as if some unknown presence was advancing steadily. It was vast, towering, and sinister. Suddenly the heavens were rent by a deafening peal of thunder. Gilliatt felt the shock. There is a dreariness about the thunder. This terrible reality in this region of visions was awe-inspiring.

It was like the overturning of some ponderous article of furniture in a giant's chamber. No flash preceded the deafening crash. Just one clap, and then silence reigned around.

There was a pause, as when hostile forces are taking up their ground. Then, at intervals, there appeared huge, shapeless flashes, unaccompanied by thunder. Not a sound, and all showed bright and distinct in every flash. The wall of cloud had changed to a cavern; it was full of arches and vaulted halls. Outlines of shapes could be descried; monstrous heads were dimly discernible; necks seemed to be stretched forth, and elephants, with castles on their backs, were seen for a moment and then vanished away. A cylinder of vapour, straight, round, and dark, topped by a white mist, imitated the funnel of a colossal steamboat swallowed up by the waves, yet still smoking. Sheets of cloud simulated the folds of enormous banners. In the centre, under a dark, red canopy, a mass of dense fog sunk motionless and inert, impenetrable to the electric fires—a sort of hideous conception in the bosom of the storm.

Suddenly Gilliatt felt a breath of wind stir his hair. Two or three large drops of rain fell heavily on the rock beside him. Then came another peal of thunder. The wind was rising; the terror of the darkness had attained its pitch. The first peal of thunder had stirred up the sea; the second rent the cloud-wall to its foundations; a wide gap was visible in it; the deluge, hitherto restrained, rushed towards it, and the gap became a vast gulf, filled with rain. The outburst of the storm had commenced.

It was a fearful moment.

Rain, wind, lightning, thunder, waves dashing upwards to the clouds, foam, hoarse roarings and shriekings, all mingled together, as though some horde of monstrous creatures had suddenly been let loose. The wind roared as loud as the thunder; the rain did not fall, it tumbled from the heavens. For a lonely man like Gilliatt, shut up in a lonely rock of the ocean, with an overloaded boat, there could not be a more terrible position. The danger of the sea, over which he had triumphed, was nothing to that of the storm that had now attacked him.

Surrounded on all sides by imminent perils, Gilliatt had, at the last moment, and at the crowning point of danger, displayed a wonderful amount of ingenious strategy. He had secured the enemy's territory as the seat of his operations; he had made the rocks an ally, so that the Douvres, which was formerly his enemy, was now his second in this gigantic duel. Gilliatt had built a fortress from the sepulchre. He was ensconced firmly in this wonderful stronghold of ocean. The place was invested, but it was well defended. He had, as it were, placed

his back to the wall, and boldly faced the hurricane. He had barricaded the narrow entrance—the road of the billow. This was the best thing that he could have done. Ocean, like other tyrants, can only be brought to reason by barricades. His boat might be considered secure on three sides. She was firmly wedged in between the two walls of the channel, and made fast by three anchors; she was protected on the north by the Little Douvre, on the south by the Great one, though these terrible precipices were more in the habit of wrecking vessels than saving them. On the western side, a frame of timbers, made fast to the rock, sheltered her—a well-tried obstacle, that had withstood the force of the flood-tide; a veritable gate of a fortress, having for its door-posts the Douvres themselves. There was no danger from that side. It was from the east that danger was to be anticipated. On that side there was no protection, save that of the breakwater. A breakwater is an apparatus for dividing and distributing the force of the waves, and requires, at least, two frames, but Gilliatt had only had time to construct one; he was compelled to build the second when the tempest was almost upon him. Fortunately, the wind blew from the north-west. This wind is not a very dangerous enemy. The north-west wind, which is the ancient *galerno*, made but little impression on the Douvres. It attacked the rock on one side, and did not drive the waves into either of the channels, but washed them harmlessly against the rocks. The first attack of the storm had been badly arranged. But the wind now attacks in a curve, and it was likely that some sudden change would take place. If it should veer round to the east before the second framework could be finished the peril would be excessive. The sea would then have free access into the channel, and all would be lost.

The fury of the tempest increased. A storm heaps blow upon blow. Its strength lies in this as well as its weakness. Its fury enables human intellect to triumph over it, and to defend itself; but under what terrible attacks! Nothing is more terrible than these. No respite; no interruption; no truce; no breathing time. There seems a species of cowardice in this prodigality of the Inexhaustible. It is the lungs of the Infinite that inflate the storm.

All the immensity of the ocean in its fury precipitated itself upon the Douvres. Numberless voices were heard. Who was it shouting like this? The ancient tune of the sea was there. At one time it seemed as though the word of command was

being given; then came clamours, the sounds of trumpets, strange trepidations, and then that loud, majestic roar which sailors term the *voice of the deep*. The indefinite and fleeting eddies of the wind whistled as they tore up the waves. The billows, transformed into giant quoits, were hurled against the rocks by invisible athletes. The enormous masses of surf flowed over the rocks. Torrents above, foam below. Then the din increased. No sound, either human or bestial, could give any idea of this terrible uproar, mingled with the ceaseless breaking of the sea. The artillery of the clouds thundered, the hail poured out its volleys, and the waves mounted to the assault. In certain quarters the wind seemed motionless; in others it flew past at the rate of twenty fathoms a second. As far as the eye could reach, the sea was all in foam. Ten leagues of soapy water filled the horizon. Doors of flame were opened, clouds seemed consumed by clouds, and on the top of this mass were nebulous clouds, red and blazing as embers. Floating configurations rushed against each other and united, each taking the other's shape. There was a sound in the heavens as of file firing.

There appeared to be, in the centre of the heavens, a vast magazine, from which fell, in enormous quantities, waterspouts, hail, crimson flame, phosphoric gleams, darkness, and lightnings.

Gilliatt seemed to take no heed; his head was bent over his work. The second framework was nearly finished. The blow ~~was~~ <sup>of</sup> his hammer replied to the peals of thunder. These sounds could be heard high above the roar of elements. His head was bare, for a gust of wind had borne away his cap.

His thirst was excessive; he was probably parched with fever. Small pools of water had formed in fissures of the rock. From time to time he took some water in the hollow of his hand, and swallowed it. Then, not deigning to cast a glance at the storm, he pursued his task.

A moment might cause him to gain or lose all. He knew what would happen if the breakwater was not finished in time. Why, then, lose time in watching for the face of Death, which came nearer every moment.

The turmoil around him was like that of a vast bubbling cauldron. There was noise and strife on every side. There were moments when the lightnings descended as if they were coming down the rungs of a ladder. They struck continually upon the same points of the rock, where there were, probably, metallic veins. Hailstones fell as big as his fist. Gilliatt was, from time

to time, compelled to empty the pockets of his overcoat, which were filled with hailstones. The storm had now veered round to the west, and was lashing the barricades between the two Douvres; but he had every confidence in his breakwater, and not without reason. These barricades were formed of the forepart of the *Durande*, and yielded to the shock of the waves. Elasticity is a resistance. Stevenson's experiments have proved that, against the force of the waves, a collection of wood, of given dimensions, chained and fastened in a certain manner, will oppose the rush of the waters more effectually than a stone breakwater. The barriers of the Douvres fulfilled these conditions. They were, in addition, so ingeniously made fast that the wave, striking them underneath, drove in the nails, and pressed and consolidated the work against the rocks. The wind was only able to cast flakes of foam over the barriers upon Gilliatt's boat. On that side the most that the storm could do was to spit its foam at its enemy, who was securely sheltered from its futile rage.

The foam, pouring in on all sides, was like flakes of wool. The vast and angry ocean poured over the rocks, and filled every crack and crevice with water, and retired again from the chinks in the granite, forming a number of small fountains, which fell like graceful threads of silver into the sea. The second framework of the eastern barrier was nearly finished. A few more knots of rope and pieces of chain, and this new outwork could take its place in the struggle.

Suddenly there was a brilliant brightness—the rain ceased, the clouds rolled back, the wind had just shifted, a kind of dark, lofty window opened in the zenith, and the lightnings were extinguished. It seemed like the end, but it was only the commencement.

The change of wind was from the sou'-west to the nor'-east.

The storm was preparing to attack again with a fresh army of hurricanes. The north was about to mount to the assault.

The attack now coming from the east was directed against the weaker point of the position. Gilliatt stopped his work, and looked around him. He took his stand upon a curved projection of the rock behind the second barrier, which was now nearly completed. If the first hurdle had been carried away it would have destroyed the second—which was not yet firmly fixed, and would inevitably have crushed Gilliatt. In the position which he had chosen he would have been dead before he could have seen the boat and the engine pounded to atoms, and sunk in the boiling

hell of waters. Such was the risk that he ran. He accepted it boldly. When all his hopes were wrecked, what could he have hoped for save death—to die the first; for, in his idea, the engine represented a living being? Thrusting aside from his eyes his hair, dank with rain and foam, he grasped his trusty hammer and waited.

He had not to wait long.

A brilliant flash of lightning gave the signal.

The livid opening in the zenith closed once more. A deluge of rain fell, and all again grew dark, and there was no light, save the intermittent flashes of lightning. The attack had begun again in dread earnest.

A heavy swell, visible in the occasional glare of the lightning, was rolling on the eastern side, beyond the Man-Rock. It resembled a huge cylinder of glass; it was green, without a fleck of foam, and stretched right across the sea. It was rushing upon the breakwater, increasing in volume as it drew nearer. It was a kind of dark, gigantic pillar, rolling on its side upon the surface of the sea. The thunder growled in a sinister manner.

The great wave struck the Man-Rock, broke in two, and passed on. The two broken portions rejoined, and, forming a mountain of water, came down perpendicularly on the breakwater. This wave was in the shape of a huge beam. This battering-ram crushed against the breakwater. The shock was terrible. The spot was completely clothed in foam.

Those who have never seen them cannot picture to themselves those snowy avalanches which the sea tosses about, and under which it engulfs, in a moment, rocks more than a hundred feet in height, such as the Great Anderlo, at Guernsey, and the Pinnacle, at Jersey. At Saint Mary, of Madagascar, it leaps entirely over the promontory of Tintingue.

For some moments nothing was to be seen but sea. Nothing was visible but a seething mass of raging waters, an immovable mass of foam, the whiteness of a winding sheet, blown about by the wind from the tomb.

Nothing could be heard but the roar of the storm, carrying devastation and destruction with it. When the foam had disappeared, Gilliatt was still at his post. The barrier had held firm—not a chain was broken, not a nail displaced. The breakwater had stood the test; it had proved pliant as a hurdle and firm as a wall. The great wave was now nothing but a shower of drops.

A rivulet of foam, running down the incline of the rock, died

away as it reached the boat. The man who had thus muzzled the ocean gave himself not a moment for repose. The storm, fortunately, turned aside its rage for a time. The fury of the waves spent themselves upon the faces of the rock. There was a lull, and Gilliatt took advantage of it to complete the interior barrier. The day passed away in this toil. The hurricane continued its violence upon the flank of the rocks with mournful solemnity. The receptacles of fire and water in the heavens poured out their contents without exhausting themselves. The undulations of the wind, above and below, were like the undulations of a dragon. When the night came it was hardly noticed, so profound was the darkness; and yet it was not utter darkness. The storms, alternately illuminating and blinding by their lightnings, are intervals of the visible and the invisible. All is weird light, then all black darkness. It is sometimes the entrance into the land of spectres, then the return into the regions of night.

A phosphoric zone, tinged with the purple hues of the Aurora Borealis, floated like a ghastly flame behind the dense clouds, giving to everything a spectral appearance, and making the rain-drifts luminous.

This uncertain light proved of service to Gilliatt, and assisted him in his operations. By its aid he was enabled to repair the forward barrier. The breakwater was now nearly complete. As he was busy making fast the last beam with a strong cable, the wind blew directly in his face. He raised his eyes; the wind had shifted to the nor'-east, and the attack upon the channel had re-commenced. Gilliatt cast a glance at the breakwater. An enormous wave was rolling in. This wave broke with a heavy shock; a second followed, then another, and another—five or six in one tumultuous rush—and, lastly, one larger than all the rest. This last, which was an accumulation of force, had a singular resemblance to a living creature. It would have been easy to imagine, in that swelling mass of water, the shape of fins and gills. It fell with enormous force, and broke on the barriers in a cloud of foam. Its almost animal-form was torn to atoms in a series of fits and gushes, resembling some sea-monster being crushed to death upon these cruel rocks. The waters rushed through, subsiding but devastating as they did so. The mighty wave clung and bit in its last moments. A shiver shook the rock to its roots. A roaring, as of beasts, was heard. The foam, tossed on high, resembled the spouting of a whale. As it subsided it showed what damage it had inflicted; the last attempt had been crowned with success. This time the breakwater had

not escaped unscathed. A long, heavy beam, torn from the first barrier, had been carried over the second, and hurled violently upon the projecting rock, where Gilliatt had been standing a moment before. By good fortune he had not returned to his former position; had he done so, he must have been killed upon the spot. There was something remarkable in the fall of this beam, which, by preventing the framework from rebounding, saved Gilliatt. It was of further use, as will be seen. Between the projecting rock and the interior of the channel there was a cavity, a sort of hiatus, resembling a place cut out by an axe, or the split formed by a wedge.

One of the ends of the beam, as it was cast into the air, had caught in this notch. The hole had become enlarged.

The idea seized Gilliatt of bending heavily upon the other end of this beam. The beam, caught firmly by one end in the notch, which it had widened, projected from it like an outstretched arm. This kind of arm projected parallel with the anterior wall, and the disengaged end stretched from its resting-place some eighteen or twenty inches—a good distance for the object to be attained. Gilliatt raised himself, by means of hands, feet, and knees, to the rock, and placed his back against the enormous lever. The beam was a long one, which increased its raising power. The rock was already loosened, but he had to try and strain once more. The sweat poured from his forehead. The fourth attempt exhausted all his strength. There was a loud cracking noise; the gap, spreading into a fissure, opened, and the heavy mass fell into the passage below, with a noise of thunder. The mass of stone fell without breaking, and rested in its bed like a Druidical cromlech—all in one piece. The beam, which had served as a lever, descended with the rock, and Gilliatt, slipping forward, nearly fell with it into the gulf below. The passage was at this time full of huge round stones, and there was little water in it; the monolith, lying in the foam, which bespatted Gilliatt as he approached it, stretched right across the two parallel rocks of the passage, and formed a transversal wall—a kind of cross-stake between the two precipitous sides. Its two ends touched the rocks. It had been rather too long to lie flat, but its summit of soft rock had been knocked off in its fall. This fall formed a species of *cul-de-sac*, which may still be seen, and the water behind this stony barrier is generally calm and peaceful. This was an obstacle even stronger than the forward timbers of the Durande fixed between the two Douvres.

It came just in time.



The blows of the waves had continued. Where it meets with an obstacle the sea grows more stubborn. The first breakwater was beginning to come to pieces. One breach in a breakwater is a serious matter. It spreads and cannot be repaired, as the waves would carry away the workmen.

A gleam of lightning showed Gilliatt the damage that had been done: beams thrown here and there, ends of rope and bits of chain beginning to flap in the wind, and a large rent in the centre. The second one was unhurt. The block of stone which Gilliatt had thrown down had one defect, in spite of its strength—it was too low; the sea could not get through it, but would sweep over it. It was useless to think of building it higher. Nothing but masses of rock could be placed on a barrier of stone; but how could he detach them—how drag them to their position? Or, how could they be raised or fixed? Timber he might add, but rocks, never!

Gilliatt was not an Enceladus.

The want of height of this granite isthmus disturbed him a good deal.

It was not long before the effects of this fault were felt. The attacks upon the breakwater were continual; the heavy seas seemed to have made up their minds to destroy it. A kind of trampling sound was heard upon the shaken fabric. All of a sudden a binding stake, torn from the shattered frame, was swept over the second barrier and across the transverse rock and carried through the windings of the channel until it was lost to sight. He feared that it would injure the boat. Very luckily, the water in the interior, enclosed as it was on all sides, was but little affected by the turmoil without. The waves there were comparatively small, and the shock would not be a heavy one. But he had no time to dwell upon a possible mishap, for every species of danger was uniting at one time; the tempest had concentrated its attacks upon his vulnerable side, and the peril was imminent. For a moment the darkness was intense—the lightning ceased to flash; it was a sort of sinister alliance—the cloud and the sea were one; then came a dull, heavy peal of thunder.

This was followed by a violent outburst. Gilliatt thrust forward his head. The breakwater, which was in front of the barrier, had been torn away; the beams were tossing about in the foaming billows. The sea was using the first breakwater as a battering-ram to destroy the second one.

Gilliatt felt what a general must experience when he sees his

advanced guard driven in. The second row of beams resisted the shock, for they were securely fastened. But the broken frame was very heavy, and at the mercy of the waves, which hurled it backwards and forwards; the ropes and chains, which still held together, prevented it from breaking up entirely, but the qualities that Gilliatt had given it as a means of defence rendered it a formidable engine of destruction. Instead of a shield it was a battering-ram. Broken ends of beams and planks stuck out on all sides, and formed teeth and spurs. The tempest could not have found a more convenient weapon for the purpose.

It, was the projectile; the sea, the catapult. Blow followed blow with dismal regularity, and Gilliatt, pensively posted behind the barricade which he had erected, listened to the efforts that Death was making to force his way in. He reflected bitterly that, had it not been for the funnel of the *Durande* having been caught by the wreck, he would have been in Guernsey with his boat in safety, and the engine saved.

But now the dreaded moment had come, and the work of destruction was accomplished. There was a sound like a death-rattle. The whole frame of the breakwater, with its double apparatus crushed and heaped confusedly together, came back in a torrent of foam, and rushed on to the stone barricade like chaos upon a mountain, and there it stopped. Here all the fragments lay heaped up together—a mass of beams, through which the waves still rushed, but breaking as they did so. Conquered though it was, the breakwater still struggled gallantly. The sea had broken it, and in its turn was broken by its conquered foe. Though shattered, it was still effective. The rock which checked its further progress still held it fast. The channel, as we have said, was very narrow at this point, and the victorious wind had heaped together all the fragments of the breakwater, and, by driving the broken ends into the mass, had rendered it a fairly solid pile. It was broken, but still impregnable. Only some portions were carried away. They were floated off by the waves. One was hurled through the air close to Gilliatt; he felt the wind as it passed by him. Some waves, however—huge waves which, in storms, return with great regularity—continued to sweep over the ruins of the breakwater. They fell into the channel, and, in spite of its turns and angles, made the water within rough. The waves began to pour ominously through it. The strange kisses that the waves gave to the rocks could be plainly heard.

How could he prevent this agitation of the waters from reaching

his boat? It would not take long for the gusts of wind to make a storm in the interior of the rock, and with a few heavy seas his boat would be staved in, and the engine that it contained sunk to the bottom of the sea.

As Gilliatt thought of this he shuddered.

But he was not discouraged; his was a soul that never thought of giving way.

The hurricane had now discovered means of attack, and rushed madly between the two Douvres.

All of a sudden, from behind Gilliatt, was heard a terrible crash, echoing and reverberating through the passage louder and more terrible than he had yet heard.

It came from the direction of the boat.

Something awful was taking place.

A blaze of lightning revealed the whole situation.

A wave, rushing through the eastern entrance, had been met by a gust of wind from the other side. A disaster was impending.

As yet, the boat appeared to have sustained no damage; moored as she was, she afforded but little hold to the storm, but the wreck of the *Durande* was in sad distress.

It presented a considerable surface to the storm. She was entirely out of the water, and suspended in the air. The hole which Gilliatt had cut in her to release the machinery had weakened her hull—the keelson was broken, the vertebral column of the skeleton was snapped. The hurricane had passed over it. Little more was needed to complete the work of destruction: the deck-planking was bent like the leaves of an open book; the breaking-up had begun. It was the crash of this that Gilliatt had heard.

As he drew near, the sight that presented itself to him seemed almost to be beyond repair.

The square opening had become a hideous wound, and the wind, acting on this cutting, had torn away the planking. This transverse fracture cut the wreck into two pieces; the back part nearest to the boat had remained firm, clasped in the vice-like grasp of the rocks; the other portion, nearest to Gilliatt, was hanging down. A fracture, as long as it will hold, is a kind of hinge. This mass was hanging on its fractures, as though upon joints, swinging backwards and forwards with a melancholy grinding sound.

Happily, the boat was no longer beneath it; but this swinging motion shook the other half of the hull still fastened firmly in the rocks. From shaking to falling is not far. Under the obstinate assaults of the wind, the broken portion could easily

carry away the other, which almost touched the boat, and then boat, engine, and all would be swallowed up.

Gilliatt had all this before his eyes.

It was the catastrophe that he had dreaded—how to avert it? He was one of those to whom danger brings counsel. He pulled himself together in a moment. He ran to his storehouse and furnished himself with his axe. The hammer had done its work well: now it was the turn of the hatchet. Then he mounted on the wreck, and took his stand upon that portion of the deck that had not yet given at all, and, bending over the precipice between the *Douvres*, began to cut away the broken beams, and to sever whatever retained them fixed to the hull. To complete the separation of the two portions of the wreck, to lighten that part that still remained firm, and to throw into the sea the portion that had become the prey of the winds, was the operation that he was about to commence. This was more perilous than difficult. The portion of the wreck that was hanging down, acted on by the wind and its own weight, was only hold up at certain points. The whole wreck resembled a folding screen, one leaf of which, hanging down, beat against the other. Five or six pieces, bent and broken but not started, hung together. The fractures groaned and creaked at each gust of the wind, and the axe, so to speak, had but to help the wind to complete its work. The smallness of the portion that hung together, whilst it rendered Gilliatt's work easy, increased the danger. At any moment it might give way beneath his feet. The storm had reached its height. The tempest up to this time had been terrible; now it was simply horrible. The convulsion of the sea had reached the heavens. Up to that time the clouds had had the mastery; they had seemed to work their own imperious will, and to afford that impulse which lashed the winds to fury, whilst they still preserved a kind of ominous lucidity. Below was madness, above was anger. The heavens are the breath, the sea but the foam; hence the superiority of the wind. But it had become drunk with its own horrors. It was nothing but a whirlwind. It was blindness giving birth to the night. Tempests, at times, grow mad—when all the firmament is filled with a species of delirium—when heaven knows not what it does, and hurls its lightnings blindly. It was the hour of terror; the quivering of the rock was at its height. Every storm has its orientation, but this time it had deviated from its appointed course. It was the storm's evil hour. At that moment "the wind," as Fuller says, "is a furious madman." It is at this time that the tempest gives

forth all that electric fluid, which Piddington calls the "waterfall of lightning." It is at that moment that in the blackest clouds appears—no one can guess why, unless it be to gaze upon the universal terror—a bluish circle of light, which old Spanish sailors call the "eye of the tempest"—*el ojo de tempestad*.

This gloomy eye was fixed upon Gilliatt.

He, on his side, was looking at the heavens. He raised his head. After every stroke of his axe, he looked upwards almost proudly. He was, or seemed to be, too near to the brink of destruction not to feel haughty. He took care only to place his feet on solid resting-places of the wreck. He risked his life, but yet he was careful of it. He also was worked up to a pitch. He seemed to have gained in lucidity what the tempest had lost. His strength seemed to be doubled. He was full of courage; the strokes of his hatchet seemed like notes of defiance. A pathetic struggle: on the one side was an unconquerable will; on the other, unlimited power. It was a question of who should prove the conqueror in the strife.

All, in the wide expanse of the heavens, the clouds took the shape of vast Gorgon masks. Terror, in all its possible forms, appeared. The rain came from the sea, the surf from the clouds; the phantoms of the winds bent down towards him; meteoric faces grew purple as they gazed upon him, and then died away, leaving the darkness more hideous than ever; there was nothing to be seen but torrents pouring in on all sides—raging sea, clouds heavy with rain, of ashen hue, ragged and torn, executing wild gyrations in the firmament.

Against this delirium of power, which all combined to struggle against him, skill was the only weapon that Gilliatt had to wield. He wished to hurl down all the shattered portions of the wreck, and so he weakened the fractures that acted as hinges, without breaking them altogether, leaving a few fibres that held together the whole. Suddenly he paused, with his axe raised high in the air—the work was over, the entire mass fell.

This half of the wreck fell between the Douvres just beneath Gilliatt, who stood above it, bending over it and looking down upon it. It plunged perpendicularly into the sea, and splashed the foam high upon the rocks; but was caught by the narrow walls before it reached the bottom, and remained stationary, showing, some twelve feet above the wave, the vertical mass of planking forming a wall between the Douvres, like the rock thrown into the passage a little higher up, and allowing only a small stream of water to filter through it at each

extremity—and this was the fifth barricade improvised by Gilliatt in that narrow ocean street. The storm, in its blindness, had aided him in this last work. And now, however severe the wind and the storm, the boat and the engine were safe, for the waves could no longer boil and bubble around them. Between the barricade which closed the passage on the west, and the new one which protected them on the east, no blow, either of wind or sea, could reach them.

From the catastrophe Gilliatt had drawn safety. The storm had acted as his ally. He stooped, and from a rain-pool in the rock, he filled the hollow of his hand, drank, and turning to the storm, exclaimed, "Blockhead!" Human intelligence, combatting with brute force, experiences a feeling of ironical joy in demonstrating the stupidity of its enemy. Gilliatt felt the necessity of insulting his conquered adversary, a feeling which is as old as the heroes sung in Homer's lays.

He went down to his boat and examined it by the gleam of the lightning. It was time that someone should have come to her aid, for the poor thing had been roughly treated for the last few hours, and had begun to give way; but as the sea around her grew calm, and as her anchors all held, she was in no very evil plight. As for the engine, the four chains had kept it perfectly steady.

As Gilliatt finished his inspection, a white object dashed past him, and was lost in the gloom. It was a seamew.

No more pleasing apparition could have manifested itself: when the birds return, the storm is retiring.

Another excellent sign was that the thunder redoubled its peals. The rain ceased all of a sudden. There was only a surly growl in the heavens. The storm ceased with the suddenness of a plank falling to the ground. It had lasted for twenty hours. The wind which had brought the storm, bore it away. A dark pile of cloud was scattered over the horizon. The mist broke up and dispersed. From one end to the other of the hostile line, there were signs of defeat. There was a hoarse, gradually-decreasing murmur, a few last drops of rain fell, and all the cloud that had been charged with rain and thunder, like some terrible war chariot, broke up and fled.

Soon the blue sky began to show.

Gilliatt, for the first time, felt that he was weary. Sleep pounces on fatigue like a bird on its prey. Gilliatt felt his limbs bend beneath him, and casting himself into his boat, without stopping to choose a place, was soon buried in slumber. He remained thus for some hours, stretched at full length and motionless, hardly to be distinguished from the joists and beams amidst which he lay

## BOOK IV.

## OBSTACLES IN THE WAY.

## CHAPTER I.

## HE WHO IS HUNGRY IS NOT ALONE.

WHEN he awoke he was hungry.

The sea was growing calmer, but it was still too much agitated to allow him to leave the rock at once. Besides, the day was too far advanced. With the heavy freight that she had on board, in order to reach Guernsey before midnight, he would have to set off in the early morning. Although he was suffering from the pangs of hunger, Gilliatt commenced by stripping himself, the best way of getting warm. His clothes had been soaked through by the storm, but the rainwater had washed out the salt from the sea, so that all he had to do was to dry them.

He kept nothing on but his trousers, which he turned up to his knees; he spread out and secured with large stones, in different portions of the rock, his shirt, his jersey, his overcoat, his leggings, and his sheepskin.

Then he thought of getting something to eat.

Gilliatt had recourse to his knife, which he always kept sharp and fit for use, and with it he detached from the rock a few limpets, similar to the *clonisses* of the Mediterranean. These are, as it is well known, eaten raw, but after so many various and severe labours such a meal was rather a scanty one. He had no more biscuit, but of water there was now no scarcity—he was inundated with it. He took advantage of the tide being out to wander about the rocks in search of crayfish. Sufficient rock was uncovered to give him hopes of a successful search. Only he did not remember that he could no longer cook anything. Had he taken the pains to go to his storeroom, he would have found it deluged with rain; his wood and coal were under water, and of his tow, which served instead of tinder, every atom was wet through. He had no means of lighting a fire.

As for the other matters, his blower was completely out of order, the screen of the hearth of his forge was entirely broken down. The storm had pillaged his workshop. With such tools as had escaped damage Gilliatt would, at a pinch, have done

carpenter's, but not blacksmith's, work. But just now his thoughts were not on his workshop. His appetite led him in another direction, and, without much reflection, he had set out in pursuit of food. He wandered about, not in the channel between the rocks, but outside at the back of the breakers. It was on that side that the Durande, ten weeks before, had struck upon the reef.

This outside portion of the rock was more favourable for his search than the interior. At low water crabs have a custom of leaving their holes, and warming themselves in the sun. These misshapen creatures love the midday. It is a strange sight to see them emerge from the water in the full light of day. When you perceive them, with their awkward, sidelong walk, clambering heavily from crevice to crevice in the lower stages of the rocks, like the steps of a staircase, you are compelled to confess that there are vermin in the sea.

For the past two months Gilliatt had lived upon this vermin. Upon this day, however, both crabs and crayfish were wanting. The storm had caused them to take refuge in their hiding-places, and they had not yet ventured out. Gilliatt held his open knife in his hand, and, every now and then, scraped up a shell-fish from under the seaweed, which he ate as he pursued his search. He was nearing the spot where *Sieur Clubin* had perished. As Gilliatt had made up his mind that for his meal he must be contented with the sea-urchins, or the *châtaignes de mer*, a clattering sound at his feet attracted his attention. A large crab, terrified at his approach, had dropped into a pool of water. The water was not deep enough to conceal it from Gilliatt's sight. He chased the crab along the base of the rock; the crab fled.

Suddenly, he lost it.

It must have taken refuge in some crevice under the rock.

Gilliatt clutched some of the projections of the cliff, and bent over to see where it shelved away.

There was, as he suspected, an opening in which the crab had sought refuge.

It was much more than an opening; it was a kind of porch. The sea entered under it, but it was not deep. He could see that the bottom was covered with large pebbles, which were clothed with marine vegetation, showing that they were never dry. They looked like a number of infants' heads covered with green hair.

Gilliatt took his knife between his teeth, and, with the assist-



ance of his hands and feet, descended the face of the rock, and leaped into the water, which reached up to his armpits. He entered the porch, and found himself in a rough kind of passage, with a rudely vaulted ceiling overhead. The walls were polished and slippery. He had lost sight of the crab. He was within his depth, but, as he advanced down the passage, he began to leave the light of day behind him, and his eyes were hardly yet accustomed to the darkness. After advancing some fifteen paces the vaulted roof above his head ceased—he had got to the end of the passage; the space was more open, and, consequently, there was more light; besides, his eyes were growing more used to the semi-twilight, and he could distinguish objects better. A surprise was in store for him.

He had come into the same strange cavern into which he had penetrated more than a month before. Only, this time he had entered from the sea. He had just come through the sunken arch which he had noticed before; for at certain times of the tide it evidently afforded a practicable entrance. Now that his eyes were accustomed to the light, he saw better and better. He was filled with wonder. He was once more in that strange palace of shadow—that vaulted roof, those pillars, those ruddy, blood-coloured stains on the walls, that marine vegetation which seemed studded with brilliant gems, and, at the end, that chamber resembling a sanctuary, and that stone which was so like an altar.

Opposite to him, high up in the rock, he saw the cavity by which he had entered, and which, from the point where he stood, was quite inaccessible. He perceived near the arch those dark and gloomy cavities which he had before contemplated from a distance. Those caves within a cave were now close to him; they were quite dry and easy of entrance. Nearer yet than this recess he perceived, just above the level of the water, a horizontal crevice in the granite. He thought it likely that the crab had taken refuge there, and, plunging his hand in, begun to grope about in the darkness.

Suddenly he felt his arm grasped, and a feeling of indescribable horror crept over him.

Some living thing—thin, rough, flat, icy, and slimy—from the dark depth of the cavity had twined itself round his arm, and was crawling up towards his breast. Its pressure was like that of a strap being drawn tight, and its steady persistence like that of a drill. In less than a second, a something, he knew not what, but felt that it was of a spiral form, had closed round

his wrist and elbow and reached his shoulder, and a pang went through his body below his armpit.

He drew back hastily, but all power of motion had almost left him. He was nailed to the spot. With his left hand, which still remained free, he grasped the knife which was between his teeth, and, setting his back to the rock, made a desperate effort to withdraw his arm. He only succeeded in loosening the deadly clasp for a moment, which immediately tightened again.

It was pliant as leather, strong as steel, and cold as night. A second object, long and pointed, emerged from the cavity, like a tongue issuing from a pair of monstrous jaws. It appeared for a moment to lick Gilliatt's naked chest, then, stretching itself out until it became longer and thinner, it crept over his flesh and wound itself round him. At the same time a terrible and indescribable sense of pain compelled every nerve and muscle of his body to quiver. He felt hundreds of blunt points penetrating his flesh—it seemed as if innumerable minute mouths had fastened upon his body and were seeking to drain away his life-blood.

A third undulating, whip-like shape issued from the rock and lashed his body with a quivering movement; suddenly, it fixed itself upon him as firmly as the others had done.

Agony, when wrought up to a certain pitch, is dumb, and Gilliatt uttered no cry. There was sufficient light for him to see the repulsive shapes that had wound around him. A fourth ligature—but this time with the swiftness of an arrow—darted towards his stomach, and clasped it in its foul embrace.

It was impossible to sever or to tear away the slimy bands which enlaced his body so tightly, adhering to it by a number of suckers. Each of these was the focus of strange and agonising pains. He felt that numberless minute mouths were devouring him at once.

A fifth long, slimy object glided from the cavity. It passed by the others, and wound itself round Gilliatt's chest so tightly that he could hardly draw his breath. These whip-like ribbons were pointed at the end, but grew broader, like the blade of a sword towards the hilt, and all five evidently sprang from a common centre. They crept and glided all over him. He felt those strange pressures, which seemed to proceed from the suction of miniature mouths, shift their position from time to time.

Suddenly, a huge slimy mass, round and flattened, issued from below the cavity. It was the centre to which these five limbs were attached, like the spokes of a wheel. On the opposite

side of this loathsome monster could be seen the commencement of three other tentacles, the ends of which were concealed beneath the rock.

In the centre of this slimy mass were two eyes.

These eyes were fixed upon Gilliatt.

He knew that he was in the clutches of a devil-fish

## CHAPTER II.

### A MONSTER.

To believe in a devil-fish, you must have seen one.

Compared to it, the hydras of ancient lore would only raise a smile.

There are times when we are prone to believe that the intangible which floats through our dreams may be realised in the Realm of the Possible. Attractive forces, which have the power to take form and to give shape to the creation, form dreams. The unknown performs these miracles for us, and uses its power to create monsters.

Orpheus, Homer, and Hesiod could do no more than imagine the chimera. It was left for heaven to create the devil-fish.

When Providence desires it, it excels in the production of monsters. The why and the wherefore of this is a constant source of doubt to the religious thinker.

The whale has bulk, whilst the devil-fish is comparatively small; the hippopotamus is covered with a coat impenetrable to weapons, the devil-fish is bare; the jaraca utters a hissing sound, the devil-fish is mute; the rhinoceros has a horn, the devil-fish has none; the scorpion has a sting, not so the devil-fish; the shark has pointed fins, the devil-fish has none; the lion has claws, the devil-fish has none; the crocodile has a terrible jaw, the devil-fish has no teeth; but for all that, it has more terrible arms than all these fearful creatures put together.

What is the devil-fish? It is the vampire of the ocean.

The bold swimmer, who may be attracted by the beauty of those spots amongst the breakers, where the sea exhibits all its charms; where the deep, still waters hide all the magnificence of the ocean; where are the homes of many a scaly denizen of the deep, runs the risk of meeting it, should he venture into those waters. Should you do so, cast aside curiosity and avoid it.

You may enter his den filled with wonder, you will leave it paralysed with terror. A meeting like this is always possible amidst the rocks in the open sea.

A dull, grey-coloured form undulates partly in the water; it is as thick as a man's arm, and about a foot and a-half in length. It looks like a bundle of rags, and resembles in shape a closed umbrella without a handle. This misshapen mass advances towards you slowly; suddenly it opens; eight long tentacles extend from around a face with two dull glassy eyes. Their slow undulations are like lambent flames. They resemble the spokes of a wheel, and are four or five feet in diameter. It darts upon its prey and harpoons its victim.

It winds round its victim, covering him and enveloping him in its slimy folds. Below it is yellow, above it is ashen coloured. No comparison could fitly describe this strange hue. It looks like a beast made of ashes inhabiting the sea. It is a spider in its shape; a chameleon in its rapid changes of hue. When angry it becomes purple. Its most disgusting characteristic is its impalpability. Its slimy folds strangle; its very touch paralyses. It looks like a mass of scorbutic gangrened flesh; it is a hideous picture of loathsome disease. Once fixed you cannot tear it away. It clings closely to its prey. How does it do so? By creating a vacuum. The eight long antennæ are large at the root and tapering to a sharp point. On the lower side of each of these are two rows of pustules, decreasing in size, the larger ones towards the root and the smaller towards the point. There are twenty-five in each row—that is, fifty upon each antennæ. Altogether there are four hundred. Each of these pustules is a perfect cupping-glass. They are cartilaginous substances, cylindrical and horny. On the larger species they decrease from the size of a five-franc piece to that of a pea. They can penetrate to the depth of an inch. This apparatus for suction has all the delicacy of a keyboard. It comes forward and then disappears; it obeys the slightest impulse of the creature to which it belongs. The most exquisite sensibilities cannot equal the power of contraction that these suckers possess, proportioned, as they always are, to the interior movements of the creature, and to the exterior incidents. It is like a sensitive plant. This monster is termed by sailors a "poulp," the scientific name of which is *cephaloptera*, whilst in legendary lore they are known as *krakens*. English mariners call them *devil-fish* and *blood-suckers*. In the Channel Islands they are spoken of as *pieuvre*.

It is rarely found in Guernsey; of small size in Jersey; but is very common and of great magnitude in Sark. An engraving in an edition of Buffon, by Sonnini, represents a "poulp" destroying a frigate. Denis Montfort believes that in the northern latitudes these creatures are of sufficient force to sink a ship. Bory Saint-Vincent denies this, but agrees that in our own countries they will attack man. If you go to Sark, they will show you a hollow rock, near Brecq-Hou, where a "pieuvre," some years ago, seized and drowned a lobster-catcher. Peron and Lamarck were deceived when they disbelieved the fact that a poulp, having no fins, cannot swim. He who writes these lines has seen at Sark, in a cavern called the "Boutiques," a pieuvre swimming after a bather. When it was killed it was found to measure four feet across, and its four hundred suckers could be easily discerned as the monster thrust them out convulsively in the agonies of death.

According to Denis Montfort—one of those careful observers, whose marvellous intuition rises or falls to the level of a wizard—the poulp has human passions, and can hate. In fact, in the absolute, to be hideous is to hate.

Whilst the pieuvre is swimming it remains, as it were, in a scabbard. It moves with all its parts drawn up under it. It resembles a sleeve with the closed fist in it, sewn up at the cuff. This fist, which is the head, cleaves the water, and advances with a vague undulating movement. It has two large but indistinct eyes, resembling the colour of the sea. When the pieuvre is in pursuit of prey, or lying in wait, it grows smaller, and draws itself together; it reduces itself, as it were, and is scarcely discernible in the half-light beneath the sea. It looks like a portion of the waves, and has no appearance of being a living creature. The pieuvre is a hypocrite; you pay no attention to it, when suddenly it opens itself and darts upon you. A lump of slime that has an instinct—can anything be more horrible? A glutinous substance, with a leaven of hatred in it. This terrible and voracious creature delights in the most limpid depths of the sea. Its approach is heralded by no sound, which makes it the more dangerous. No sooner do you perceive it than you are in its clutches.

At night, however—more especially in the warm summer evenings—it becomes phosphorescent. This frightful creature has its passions and its submarine unions. It makes itself beautiful; it shines; it illuminates itself and, from the summit of some rock, it can be perceived gleaming through the gloom of the waves—a pallid irradiation—a spectral sun.

The pieuvre swims, but it can walk as well; it is half fish and half reptile. It crawls along the bed of the ocean. In walking it uses its eight antennæ, and crawls along like a caterpillar. It has neither bones, flesh, or blood: it is flabby. There is nothing inside it. It is a mere skin; you can turn it inside-out, like the fingers of a glove. There is one orifice in the centre of its tentacles. What is this orifice? Is it a mouth or a vent? The same opening serves both purposes: it is the entrance and the exit.

The whole body is of icy coldness.

The Mediterranean jelly-fish is repulsive. The swimmer who comes in contact with that gelatinous mass, which envelops the limbs, which the hands can grasp and the nails tear without its destroying life—a species of sticky, slimy, living creature—may inspire disgust, but not the terror caused by the appearance of the pieuvre—a head of Medusa, surrounded by eight serpents.

No grasp to equal in strength the sudden clutch of the cephaloptera.

It is a pneumatic machine that attacks you. You are struggling with a void which possesses eight antennæ, no scratches, no bites, but an indescribable suffocation. A bite is to be feared far less than a wound caused by suction. A wound from a claw is simply the beast entering your flesh, but, in an attack by suckers, it is your body that is drawn into that of the beast. Your muscles swell, your sinews are twisted, your blood boils, and is horribly mingled with the slime of the creature. The terrible wretch grows upon you by a thousand foul mouths. The hydra incorporates itself with the man, and the man with the hydra; you become one and the same. The hideous dream is in your bosom. The tiger can but devour you; the poulp, horrible to relate, draws you into its system. He drags you to him and into him; bound helplessly; glued where you stand, utterly powerless, you are gradually emptied into a loathsome receptacle, which is the monster itself.

It is terrible indeed to be eaten alive: how much more so to be drank up while still living!

At first science rejected the existence of these strange creatures, according to its habitual prudence, which even rejects established facts; then it decided to study them, to dissect them, to class and catalogue them, and to write their names on a label, preserve specimens, and put them under glass-cases in the museums. They entered them into the question of their nomenclature, classed them as mollusks, invertebrates, radiata, determined their position

in the animal kingdom, place them above the calmarus, and below the cuttle-fish, divide them into large and small kinds, allow the existence of the smaller species sooner than the large ones—a habit of scientific men in all parts of the world, who are always more microscopic than telescopic. They examine into their construction, and call them cephaloptera: they count their antennæ and call them octopodes. This done, let them alone. What science relinquishes, philosophy takes up.

Then philosophy, in her turn, studies these creatures; she does not go so far, but yet further than science. She does not dissect them, but she ponders over them. Where the scalpel has been at work, she plunges into the hypothesis. She seeks for the final cause—that terrible torture of the thinker. These creatures disturb his ideas of the Creator. They are a series of hideous surprises; they are pleasure-spoilers of the spectator. He gazes on them in terror. They are forms devoted to evil. What can be said of these treasons of creation against itself? Who can solve this mystery?

The Possible is a terrible source. Monsters are impious in the concrete. Atoms of shadow issue from the mass; something incases itself, rolls, floats, condenses, borrows elements from the darkness of the ambient air; submits itself to unknown polarisations, gains life, and, moulding itself into some unknown form of obscurity, and, with some strange spirit of the miasma as its companion, wanders away, spectral-like, amongst living and breathing things.

It is like night converted into horrible forms.

Why are they created, and what use can they be put to? But we are falling back again on the eternal question.

These creatures are spectres as well as monsters; they exist, yet their existence is improbable. They are, though reasoning is against their existence. They are dwellers in the waters of death. Their very improbability complicates their existence. They touch upon the frontier of humanity, and are yet denizens of the realms of imagination.

You refuse to accept the vampire, and so the pieuvre appears. Their existence is a certainty which disconcerts our certainty. Optimism, which is, perhaps, the truth, loses its countenance in their presence. They form the visible outer ring of a black circle. They mark the transition of one reality into another. They seem to belong to that commencement of terrible creatures which the dreamer sees confusedly through the loophole of the night.

This generating of monsters, first in the invisible and then in the possible, has been guessed at—perhaps, even perceived—by the magi and philosophers in their severe ecstasies. From this comes the conjecture of the existence of a hell. The demon is the tiger of the invisible. The wild beast devouring souls has been denounced to mankind by two visionaries, one called John and the other Dante.

If, in fact, the circles of shade were prolonged indefinitely—if within one ring there was another, and this went on to an illimitable extent; if that chain—which, for our own part, we are resolved to doubt—really exists, it is certain that the pieuvre at one end proves that there is a Satan at the other.

It is certain that a criminal at one extremity proves the existence of a crime at the other. Every evil creature, like every perverted intellect, is a sphynx.

A terrible sphynx, propounding for solution a fearful problem—the enigma of evil.

It is this perfection of evil which has sometimes caused mighty intellects to incline to the belief of a double god, towards the redoubtable dual heresy of the Manchoëans.

A piece of Chinese silk, plundered during the last war from the palace of the Emperor of China, represents a shark eating a crocodile, which is devouring a sea-serpent, which is eating an eagle, which is preying on a swallow, which, in its turn, is devouring a caterpillar.

All the nature that is before our eyes is either eating or being eaten. Those devoured, devour each other.

Learned men, however, who are also philosophers, and consequently benevolent towards creation, find, or believe they find, an explanation to this.

The finality of all things has struck, amongst others, Bonnet, of Geneva—that curiously accurate reasoner, who was opposed to Buffon, as, in later times, Geoffrey Saint Hilaire was to Cuvier. The explanation they give is this: Universal death requires universal burial. The devourer's mission is to entomb. All things enter into others. Decay is nourishment—a terrible sweeping away of matter. Man, the carnivorous, is also a burier. Our life is made up of death. Such is the terrible law—we are, practically speaking, more tombs.

In our twilight world this fatality of order produces monsters. You say, For what purpose?

This is the reason.

But is this the solution? Is this the answer to our questions?



And, if it is, why is there not some different order of things?  
And so the question springs up again.

Let us live; be it so.

But let us strive that death be progress. Let us aspire to a world in which matters are not so obscure. Let the conscience that leads us thither be our pride; for let us never forget that the best is only attained through the better.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE END OF ANOTHER COMBAT.

SUCH was the terrible creature that held Gilliatt enfolded in its loathsome embrace.

This was the monster—the dweller in the grotto—the hideous genius of the place—the gloomy demon of the water.

The foul creature dwelt in the midst of all this splendour. On the day of the previous month in which Gilliatt had entered the cave, the dark outline seen by him in the water was the frightful monster in its home.

When he visited the cavern, for the second time, in pursuit of the crab, and had thrust his hand into the cavity in which he supposed that it had taken refuge, the pieuvre was there lying in ambush, and waiting for its prey.

Who could have expected to find such a tenant in this secret lurking-place?

No bird would sit—no egg would burst into life—no flower unfold its petals—no breast give milk—no heart feel the tender passion—no spirit soar aloft—if they thought for a moment of that ominous presence watching in the submarine depths.

Gilliatt had thrust his hand into the hole, and the pieuvre had seized him.

It grasped him tightly.

He was acting the part of the fly to this terrible spider.

He was up to his waist in the water, his feet planted on the slippery pebbles at the bottom, his right arm paralysed by the flat coils of the tentacles of the pieuvre, and his chest almost hidden beneath the interlaced crossings of the terrible bandage.

Out of the eight arms of the devil-fish, three were clasped around Gilliatt in this fashion; clinging to the granite on one side and to the man on the other, the monster bound its victim

to the rock. Two hundred and fifty suckers were at work upon Gilliatt at once.

Terrible complication of agony and loathing, to be grasped by an enormous hand, the elastic fingers of which, measuring more than a yard in length, were, on the inside, covered with living blisters, eating into the very flesh !

As we have said before, it is impossible to tear away the folds of the devil-fish. The more you endeavour to do so, the tighter it holds. It only makes it cling the closer. Its resistance increases with your efforts. The more the victim struggles, the tighter grow the folds.

Gilliatt's last hope was in his knife. He had only his left hand free, but, as we know, he could use that well. It might have been said of him that he had two right hands.

His open knife was in his hand.

But the tentacles of the pieuvre cannot be severed—it is a leathery substance, impossible to cut with a knife : it slips away from the blade ; besides, from its mode of attack, cutting these coils would lacerate the victim's flesh.

The poulp is a dangerous adversary, but there is a way of resisting it. The fishermen of Sark know this, as does everyone who has seen them make certain abrupt movements in the sea. The porpoises, too, know it, and have a way of snapping at the cuttle-fish, which decapitates it at once. Hence the frequent sight of cuttle-fish, poulps, and calmar floating on the sea without heads. In fact, the only vulnerable part of the poulp is the head. Gilliatt knew this well.

He had never seen a pieuvre of so large a size before. At his first encounter he found himself face to face with one of the most enormous dimensions. Many a man would have been rendered powerless from terror.

A combat with a pieuvre resembles, in a way, a fight with a bull ; there is a certain moment of which it is necessary to take advantage. With the bull it is when he lowers his neck ; with the devil-fish, when it thrusts forward its head. It is a momentary movement, and he who fails to take advantage of it is lost. All that we have related had not taken many minutes, but Gilliatt felt the two hundred and fifty suckers working with increased power.

The fearful creature is full of cunning ; it endeavours to stupify its prey, and therefore seizes it and waits.

Gilliatt grasped his knife firmly ; the suction became stronger and more painful.

He looked at the pieuvre, which looked at him in return.

All of a sudden the monster detached its sixth tentacle from the rock, and, darting it at Gilliatt, endeavoured to seize his left arm. At the same moment it thrust its head sharply forward. One second more, and that hideous mouth would have been fastened on his chest. Bleeding from his sides, and with both his arms bound, he would have been a dead man.

But Gilliatt was waiting for his opportunity. Gilliatt was on his guard. He avoided the threatening movement, and, at the instant that the creature made a bite at his chest, he struck a decisive blow with his knife.

There were two convulsions in reverse directions—that of Gilliatt and that of the pieuvre. It was like the meeting of two flashes of lightning. Gilliatt had plunged the point of his knife into the flat, slimy substance, and, with a rapid circular movement, like the flourish of a whip, he tore off the head as a man draws a tooth. It was all over in an instant.

The creature dropped at once; the terrible folds relaxed; it fell like a mass of wet linen; the suckers ceased their work of destruction, and relaxed their hold on rock and man. The body sank into the water.

Panting with his efforts, Gilliatt could see, on the pebbles at his feet, two shapeless masses of slimy matter, the head on one side and the remainder on the other—we say remainder, for we cannot dignify it by the name of a body.

Gilliatt, fearing that it might seize him again in a last convulsive moment of agony, hastily withdrew beyond the reach of its tentacles.

But the pieuvre was really dead, and he closed his knife.

## CHAPTER IV.

### NOTHING REMAINS HIDDEN, NOTHING IS LOST.

It was time for him to have killed the pieuvre—he was almost stifled; his right arm and his chest were purple with the pressure. There were numberless little swellings upon them, and here and there the blood was flowing. The best cure for such wounds is salt water and, Gilliatt plunged his arm into the sea, and, taking some water up in his hand, rubbed his chest. Under the friction the swellings subsided. When he drew back further into the water he had, without perceiving it, approached a kind of cave



Gilliat was waiting his opportunity

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which he had remarked before, not far from the cavity from which the pieuvre had darted upon him. This cave slanted inwards, and was dry. The pebbles which were heaped up there had raised the bottom beyond the height of ordinary tides. This cavity had a low-arched entrance, through which it was possible to penetrate by stooping. The strange green light that has been before referred to penetrated within it and lighted it up feebly.

Whilst rubbing his swellings, Gilliatt chanced to cast his eyes mechanically in this direction, and caught sight of the interior of the cave.

He trembled and started back.

At the end he seemed to see a face which grinned at him through the shadow.

Gilliatt had never heard of the word "hallucination," but he knew what it was well enough. Those mysterious combats with the invisible, which, for want of a better term, we call "hallucinations," are portions of our nature. Be they illusions or be they realities, visions are a fact.

He who has the gift will ever be a dreamer. Gilliatt, as we have said before, was one.

He had that depth of soul which sometimes produces the gift of prophecy. A solitary life, in solitary places, often produces this result. He believed that he was the dupe of one of those illusions, which he had more than once imagined he had seen in his nocturnal wanderings. The cavity was something in the shape of a limekiln. It was a low-roofed niche, with projections like basket-handles. The abrupt arch contracted gradually at the other end, where the rocky wall joined it and closed it up. He entered it and, bending his head, advanced towards the end.

There was something grinning.

It was a skull, and not only the skull but the entire skeleton.

A human skeleton was lying in the dark recesses of the cave.

A sight like this only impels a courageous man to continue his researches.

Gilliatt looked all round him.

He was surrounded by a legion of crabs; they made no movement: all were dead, and there was nothing left but empty shells. They lay here and there in heaps upon the pebbles which formed the floor of the cave.

Gilliatt, with his eyes fixed upon the other object, had walked through them without perceiving them.

At the extremity of the little chamber there was a greater heap—a motionless bristling-up of claws, antennæ, and mandi-

bles. Open claws sticking up, and holding nothing. The long cases did not move under their coating of prickles, and, turned upside down, exhibited their livid hollows; these heaps resembled a breach, in the attack upon which the stormers had fallen in masses.

The skeleton was under this heap.

Under this confused mass of scales, plates, and tentacles, could be seen the skull, the vertebræ, the thighs, the tibias, and the long, knotty fingers, with the nails still remaining on them. The frame of the ribs was full of crabs, and yet a living heart had once beat there. A green mould filled up the bony sockets of the eyes. Shellfish had left their slime upon the orifice where the nose had been. In the cave, hidden in the heart of the rock there was neither seaweed nor marine plants, or a breath of air. All was still, and the teeth were clenched in a ghastly smile.

The gloomy side of laughter is the strange simulation given of it by the bare skull.

This marvellous palace of the deep, with its encrustment, of gems of the ocean, had finished at last by revealing its secret. It was the den of the devil-fish; it was the tomb of the man whose bones lay there.

The skeletons of the man and the crabs waved weirdly in the reflections of the subterranean waters which trembled on the walls and roof. The horrible multitude of crabs seemed as though they were completing their repast. Nothing could have a more strange appearance than the dead devourers of carrion grouped around their dead prey.

Gilliatt had penetrated into the larder of the pieuvre. It was a dismal sight, and filled the spectator with horror; the crabs had eaten the man, and the pieuvre had, in his turn, devoured the crabs. There was not a sign of clothing on the skeleton. The man must have been seized naked. Gilliatt stooped, and removed the crabs from the bones. Who could this man have been? The skeleton was admirably articulated; it looked as though it had been prepared for a museum of anatomy. Every morsel of flesh had gone, not a muscle remained, and every bone was perfect. Had Gilliatt ever studied anatomy he could have borne evidence to this fact. The skeleton was buried beneath the crabs, and Gilliatt disinterred it. All of a sudden he bent over it more eagerly. He had perceived a kind of ligature round the spinal column.

It was a leather belt, that had evidently been buckled round the waist of the man during his lifetime

The leather was mouldy, and the buckle rusty. Gilliatt drew the belt towards him; the vertebræ resisted his efforts, and he was forced to break through them in order to remove it. The belt was in good preservation, but a crust of small shells had begun to form on it.

He felt the belt all over, and discovered a hard, square object in it. It was useless to try and unbuckle it, and he cut the leather with his knife. In it was a little iron box and a few pieces of gold. Gilliatt counted them—there were twenty guineas. The iron box was an old sailor's tobacco-box, opening with a spring. It was much rusted, and tightly closed. The spring would no longer act, owing to the effects of the water. Once more his knife served Gilliatt well, a pressure with its point caused the lid to fly open.

There were some papers inside.

Little slips of paper, very thin, folded in four; they were damp, but not injured. The closely-fitting lid had preserved them. Gilliatt unfolded them.

There were three bank-notes, of a thousand pounds sterling each, making altogether twenty-five thousand francs.

Gilliatt re-folded them, and put them back into the box, and, profiting by the small space which remained, put the twenty guineas on the top of them, closed the box in the best way he could.

Then he began to examine the belt.

The leather had been enamelled on the outside, but was rough in the interior. On this yellow surface were some letters, traced in a thick kind of ink. Gilliatt deciphered them, and read the words, "*Sieur Clubin*."

## CHAPTER V.

DEATH CAN LURK IN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIX INCHES  
AND TWO FEET.

GILLIATT put the box back in the belt, and the belt in the pocket of his trousers. He left the skeleton to the crabs, with the dead pieuvre by its side. Whilst Gilliatt had been with the skeleton and the pieuvre, the tide had risen, and he could only effect his exit by diving through the arch, but he was a past-master in all these sea gymnastics, and managed to do this without trouble. It is easy to understand the drama that had



taken place here ten weeks before—one monster had seized upon another. The pieuvre had seized Clubin.

In the inexorable gloom two hypocrites had met. There had been in the depths an encounter between two existences of watchfulness and darkness, and the monster had executed the sentence on the man—a sinister act of justice. The crabs feed on carrion, the devil-fish on crabs. The devil-fish seizes on any object which swims near him—an otter, a dog, a man, if it is strong enough—drinks its blood, and lets its body sink to the bottom of the sea; the crabs are the burying-beetles of the sea. The scent of putrifying flesh attracts them: they eat the body, and the pieuvre eats them. Dead things disappear in the crab, and the crab disappears in the pieuvre. We have already touched upon this law of supply and demand.

Clubin had become the prey of the pieuvre.

It had drawn him down and drowned him, whilst the crabs had devoured him. A passing wave had washed him into the cavity of the rock, where Gilliatt had found his bones.

Gilliatt returned, hunting in the holes of the reef for the sea-urchins and limpets; he did not want any more crabs: it was too much like eating human flesh.

Besides, he only thought of supping as well as he could before leaving. There were no more obstacles now. Great storms are always followed by days of calm, so that there was nothing more to be dreaded from the sea. Gilliatt had made up his mind to leave the next day. It was necessary to keep up, for that night, the barrier, on account of the tide, but at daybreak he would remove it, and, getting his boat out of the channel between the Douvres, to set sail and steer for Saint Sampson. There was a gentle breeze from the south-east, exactly the kind of wind to suit him. It was the first quarter of the May moon, and the days were long. Mess. Gilliatt returned from his search amongst the rocks with the sharp edge of his appetite taken off; the twilight was immersed by the pale light that came from the rising moon, and the tide, having reached its height, was beginning to fall. The funnel of the engine, towering above his boat, which had been spattered with the foam of the tempest, was covered with a deposit of salt, which gleamed like silver in the moonbeams.

This reminded Gilliatt that the storm had thrown a good deal of sea and rain into the boat, and that there was, no doubt, six inches of water in the hold. The scoop that he had for the purpose would, he thought, be sufficient to throw this out.

When he examined her, he started back in horror. There was nearly two feet of water in her.

A terrible catastrophe—his boat was leaking! She had been gradually filling during his absence, and twenty inches' increase was a very dangerous thing. A little more, and she would have foundered. Had he returned an hour later he would very likely only have found the mast and the funnel above water.

He had not a moment to think upon what he should do. It was necessary to find out the hole at once, and stop it; then to bale out the boat, or, at any rate, to lighten her in some manner. The *Durande's* pump had been lost, so that he was reduced to his scoop to empty out the water.

But first he must seek for the leak; that was the most urgent. He set to work at once, without giving himself time to dress; in his anxiety he felt neither cold nor hunger. The boat continued to fill. Happily, there was no wind; the boat's motion would have caused her to sink.

The moon set.

Gilliatt, crouched on his hands and knees, half-buried in the water; poked about for a long time, and at last discovered where the mischief lay. During the storm, at one of the most critical moments, the boat had been thrown violently against the rocks, and one of the sharp points of the Little Doves had made a hole in her hull. This leak, unfortunately—it might be almost said maliciously—had been made at the juncture of the two sides—a fact which, joined to the fury of the gale, had prevented him from seeing it at once.

The alarming point about the hole was that it was a large one; but, fortunately, though the vessel was sunk lower than usual by the weight of the water, she was still much above the customary water-line. At the time when the accident had happened the waves had rushed violently into the passage, and the boat had sunk a little under the weight of the sea, so that, even after the subsidence of the water, the weight, having raised the water-line, had kept the hole under the surface of the sea. Hence the extreme danger. But if he could succeed in stopping the hole he could afterwards empty the boat, which would then rise to her proper water-line, and the fracture would be above the water, so that the repairs could be easily effected; and Gilliatt, as we have said, had all his carpenter's tools in fair order.

But what a cloud of uncertainty had now invaded the whole matter—what fresh dangers, what unlucky chances? He could hear the water trickling in remorselessly. The least shock would

make her founder. What a misfortune! Perhaps even now it was too late. Gilliatt bitterly reproached himself. He ought to have looked at once to see if she had sustained any damage. He had been a fool to attribute those six inches of water to the foam and the rain. How angry he was with himself for having wasted his time in sleeping and eating. He almost brought himself to think that the storm and the dark night was his own fault.

He kept pouring these reproaches upon himself during the intervals of his toil, but they did not prevent him from paying every attention to the work upon which he was engaged. The leak had been found; this was the first step; the second was to stop it. That was all that it was possible to do for the time, for carpenter's work cannot be carried on under water. One favourable circumstance was that the leak was in the space between the two chains which held the funnel fast on the star-board side. The oakum, with which it was necessary to stop it, could be fixed to these chains.

The water, meanwhile, was gaining; it was now between two and three feet deep, and reached to his knees.

## CHAPTER VI.

### DE PROFUNDIS AD ALTUM.

GILLIATT had at his disposal, amongst the other stores belonging to his boat, a fair-sized tarpaulin, with lanyards at the four corners. He took this tarpaulin, and fastened the lanyards at the corners to the two rings which supported the chains of the funnel on the side of the leak, and threw it overboard. The tarpaulin fell like a sheet between the Little Douvre and the boat, and sank. The pressure of the water, endeavouring to enter the fracture in the hull, fixed it tightly against the timbers of the boat, and caused it to adhere to the spot where the leak was, which it closed effectually.

The tarred canvas was thus interposed between the interior of the hold and the water outside, not a single drop of which could enter. The leak was mastered, but not yet closed; it was a respite only.

Gilliatt took the scoop and began to bale out the boat. It was high time to lighten her. The work warmed him a little, but he was fearfully fatigued. He was compelled to confess to

himself that he could not continue the work and make the hold water-tight. He had scarcely eaten anything, and had the humiliation of feeling himself exhausted.

He measured the progress of his work by the sinking of the water from his knees downwards, but the fall was very slow. Besides, the influx of the sea was only checked; the evil was alleviated, but not cured entirely. The tarpaulin, thrust into the hole by the force of the sea, began to swell out, looking like a closed fist endeavouring to thrust its way through. The canvas, strong and thickly-coated with tar, resisted, but the tension and swelling continued, and it was far from certain that the canvas would not yield, and at any moment the swollen portion might burst and the leakage re-commence.

In similar cases, as the masters of vessels in distress very well know, there is no other resource but an application of stuffing. They collect together all the rags of canvas, pieces of blanket and other things, and thrust them into the bulging canvas in the leak.

But Gilliatt had none of these rags. Everything of the kind that he had collected in his storehouse had been either used up in the course of his work or blown away by the storm. As a last chance, he might have been able to find some pieces by searching the rocks. The boat was sufficiently lightened to permit him to leave her for a quarter-of-an-hour, but how could he conduct this search without any light, for he was in utter darkness? There was no moon, nothing but the sombre sky, studded with stars. He had no dry tow to make a match with; no tallow for a candle, no fire to light it, and no lantern to shelter it in. All was confused and indistinct, both in the boat and on the rock. He could hear the water lapping against the wounded side, but he could not see the fracture, and it was by feeling that he satisfied himself of the increasing swelling of the tarpaulin. It was impossible for him in the darkness to search for those shreds of canvas and fragments of tow scattered about on the rocks. How could he find them when he could not see a foot before him? Gilliatt gazed sadly on the obscurity of the night. So many stars and not one candle. The liquid load in the boat had lessened, but the outer pressure increased. The bulging of the tarpaulin was getting larger; it was like an abscess ready to burst. The situation, which a little while before had looked better, now assumed a more menacing aspect. A stuffing of some kind was urgently required.

Gilliatt had no materials left but his clothes. He had, it may be remembered, laid them out to dry on some of the projecting

rocks of the Little Douvre. He went and collected them together, and placed them in the gunwale of the boat. He took his waterproof coat and, kneeling down in the water, thrust it into the hole, pushing out the tarpaulin and consequently emptying it. To the coat he added his sheepskin, his woollen shirt, and his jersey—everything was used. He had only one article of clothing left—his trousers. He took them off, and increased and made firmer the plug. It was finished at last, and seemed as if it would answer. The plug went right through the side of the boat, with the tarpaulin outside to protect it. The water, in its efforts to enter, pressed against the barrier, and spread it out over the hole, blocking it at the same time. It was a species of outside compress. Inside the boat—the centre only of the bulging having been driven out—there remained, all round the hole, a sort of circular pad, formed of tarpaulin, which the very inequalities of the fracture rendered firm. The leak was stopped, but the position was most precarious. The sharp splinters of the fracture, which held the tarpaulin tight, might at any time pierce it and make holes by which the water might enter. In the darkness, Gilliatt could not see this. It was very doubtful if the plug would hold until daylight. He returned to his work of emptying out the water, but he was so exhausted that he could hardly raise the scoop; he was naked, and shivered with the cold.\* He felt that the end was terribly near.

One chance of safety flashed across his brain. A sail might pass in sight. Some fishermen,\* who might by accident be in the neighbourhood of the Douvres, might come to his aid. The moment had arrived when a helper had become a necessity. With a man and a lantern all might yet be saved. Two could easily bale out the boat, and when she was once empty she would rise to her proper water-line. The fracture would be above the water, and he would be able to place a piece of planking over the hole, and so make a thoroughly good job of it. If not, it would be necessary to wait for daylight—to wait through the whole dreary night—a delay which might prove ruinous. The force of impatience seized on him. Suppose that the lights of some vessel were even now in sight, he might trace the summit of the Great Douvre and make signals of distress. The weather was fine; there was no wind, and a man making signals on the top of a rock beneath a starry heaven might very likely be noticed. A captain of a vessel, or even the skipper of a fishing-boat, would not be in these waters without, as a matter of pre-

caution, keeping a good look-out on the Douvres with his telescope.

Gilliatt hoped that some one might see him. He climbed on to the wreck, seized the knotted cord, and ascended to the top of the rock. No sail, no light—the sea was one vast solitude. No assistance was at hand, and how could he continue the struggle?

A feeling of depression, such as he had never experienced before, crept over him; he felt utterly helpless.

A dark fatality had now assumed the mastery over him. After all his toil—after all his seeming success, after all the resolution that he had displayed—he and his boat, with the engines of the *Durande* on board, were about to become the prey of the ocean. He had no more means of continuing the combat. He must remain perfectly passive. How could he prevent the tide from flowing, the water from coming in, and the weary night from enduring? The frail plug was what all his hopes were centred in. He had, in constructing it, exhausted and stripped himself, and he could do no more to make it stronger or more secure; as it was, so must it remain, and nothing further could be done. The sea could do what it liked with this hastily-constructed apparatus; and how could he hope that it would resist the pressure of the waves? He had left it to continue the fight, for he had retired baffled and disheartened. The swelling of a wave would tear open the fracture. It was merely a question of more or less pressure.

The whole affair was going to be fought out between the mechanical quantities. Gilliatt would no longer assist his ally or repulse his enemy. He could only remain the spectator of a combat, upon which his life or death depended. Gilliatt, who up to this time had been the directing intelligence, was now reduced to act the part of mere passive resistance.

None of the trials or terrors which he had gone through had in any way approached this last crowning agony.

From the time that he had taken up his abode upon the Douvres he had found himself surrounded by solitude. This solitude did more than surround him—it wrapped him in its embraces. A thousand threats had been daily held out to him. The blast was then ready to blow, and the sea to roar. It was as impossible to gag the one as to muzzle the other. And yet he had fought bravely; mere man as he was, he had struggled hard with the ocean and wrestled with the storm.

He had made head against other anxieties and other necessities. He had become familiar with every shape of distress. He

had had to work without tools, raise weights without aid, solve problems without scientific knowledge; to live without food, drink, bed, or shelter. On that terrible rock, as upon a rack, he had been tortured by all the cruel torments of Nature—Nature who can be either a mother or an executioner, as the fit seizes her.

He had vanquished solitude, hunger, and thirst; he had vanquished cold and fever, vanquished work and vanquished sleep. He had triumphed over all the obstacles that had banded themselves together to bar his way. After his privations there were the elements, then the storm, then the devil-fish, and, lastly, the spectre of coming death.

A melancholy irony was to be the end of all. On the very rock which Gilliatt had counted on leaving as a conqueror, Clubin's skull grinned upon him sardonically. Winter, famine, fatigue, the wreck to pull to pieces, the engines to tranship, the equinoctial storms, the wind, the thunder, the devil-fish, all these were as nothing compared to the leak. Gilliatt had had fire to enable him to endure the cold, the limpets of the rock to allay his hunger; rain to slake his burning thirst; industry and energy to enable him to contend against the difficulties of his task; the breakwaters against the waves of the ocean, and his knife to save him from the deadly embrace of the devil-fish. But for that little task he could find no remedy.

This had been the sinister farewell of the storm, the coward's blow, the treacherous stroke given by the vanquished to the victor. The tempest, as it fled, launched this Parthian shaft. The enemy had rallied for a moment and dealt one last deadly blow.

The storm he had been able to baffle, but how resist the stealthy progress of the leak? If the plug gave—if the fracture opened, the boat must inevitably founder. It was like the ligature that ties the artery becoming undone: and, when once the boat had sunk, with all that heavy weight of machinery, there was no means of raising her again. The tremendous efforts of two months' Titanic labours would end in nothing. To begin again was hopeless; he had no longer a forge or materials. Perhaps, at daybreak, he should see the results of his labours sink surely and slowly into the abyss. How terrible to feel the cruel power beneath you, and the sea snatching from you the reward of your toils!

When the boat had sunk, nothing was left for him but death from hunger or cold, like the hapless mariner on the Man-Rok.

For two long months the intelligences which hover over the earth had witnessed these things. Ranged on one side were the mighty ocean, the winds, the lightnings, and the meteors; on the other, a man. On one side the sea; on the other, a human intellect; on one, the Infinite; on the other, an atom.

The contest had been long and doubtful, and now all his gallant efforts had resulted in defeat. He had no longer any clothes. He was naked in the presence of the vast.

Then—overwhelmed by the sensation of that immense unknown, no longer knowing what was required of him; confronted with the shadow in the presence of that irreducible obscurity, amidst the hoarse roar of the waves, the surf, the foam, and the breeze; under the clouds, under the vast scattered forces, under that unknown firmament of wings, of stars, and of sepulchres; under the possible, mingled with the unfathomable, having around and beneath him, the ocean, and above him the constellations—he gave up the struggle, and, casting himself down on the rock, with his face to the heavens, he raised his hands humbly, and cried aloud, “Have mercy!”

Crushed by the immensity, he prayed.

He was there alone on a rock in the midst of the sea, surrounded by all the black obscurity of night; stricken down, utterly prostrated, crushed as though with a thunderbolt, nude as a gladiator in the arena—only in the place of the arena there was the ocean, and, in place of ferocious beasts, the terrible darkness; in place of the thousand fixed eyes of the audience, the glance of the Unknown, in place of the vestal virgins, the stars; in the place of Cæsar—God!

He felt his whole being melt away in cold, weariness, powerlessness, prayer and gloom, and his eyes closed.

## CHAPTER VII.

### AN EAR THAT HEARS.

SOME hours elapsed.

The sun rose in all its brilliancy.

Its first beam fell upon a motionless form, stretched on the summit of the Great Douvre; it was Gilliatt.

He was still prostrate on the rock.

His bare form, though pinched with the cold, did not even



quiver. His closed eyelids had a pallid hue. It would have been hard for a spectator to have said whether it was a living man or a corpse that was spread out before him.

And still the sun beamed upon him.

If there was yet life in the prostrate form, one single, chill blast would have sufficed to extinguish it; but the wind began to blow warm, soft, and life-giving; it was the breath of May ushering in the coming spring; and still the sun ascended in the bright-blue sky, its beams falling more and more directly upon the prostrate form, and, little by little, enveloped Gilliatt.

He never moved. If he breathed, it was with that faint respiration which would hardly tarnish a mirror.

The sun rose higher, its rays falling more fully upon Gilliatt. The wind, which up to this time had been merely warm, was now growing almost scorching.

The bare form, with all its limbs stiff and rigid, still remained motionless, but the skin seemed to be recovering its natural hue.

The sun, which had now reached its altitude, shone almost perpendicularly on the summit of the Douvre. An immense flood of light fell from on high. The gigantic reflection from the sea, so calm and limpid, joined itself to it. The sun's rays warmed the rock, which threw some of its acquired heat upon the prostrate form.

The breast of Gilliatt heaved.

He lived.

The sun still continued fondly to caress him. The wind, which was the wind of noon and spring, breathed on him gently as it neared him.

Gilliatt made a faint movement.

The sea was inexpressibly calm. Its murmur was like the lullaby of a nurse beside the cradle of a sleeping infant. The waves seemed to shine to soothe the rock with their caresses. The sea-birds, who knew Gilliatt's form so well, fluttered above him in vague disquietude, uttering plaintive cries. They appeared to be calling to him. A seamew, who, no doubt, knew him better than the rest, was tame enough to perch near him; it began to speak to him in its own tongue, but Gilliatt paid no attention to it. The bird hopped upon his shoulder and gently pecked at his lips.

Gilliatt opened his eyes.

The birds, as if pleased at this sign of life, fled away, screaming hoarsely.

He rose from the rock, stretched himself like a lion aroused

from sleep, and, running to the edge of the platform, gazed down into the passage between the Douvres.

The boat was there, unharmed. The plug had maintained its position well; the waves had evidently had but little effect on it.

All was saved.

He no longer felt fatigue. His strength had come back to him. His swoon had resulted in a profound slumber. He descended and baled out the boat, saw that the hold was perfectly dry, and that the fracture had risen above the under tier; then he dressed, eat, and drank, and felt once again happy.

When he was able to examine the hole in the boat in broad daylight, he found that it required more work than he had imagined at first.

It was a grave injury, and one which would take a whole day to repair.

On the morrow, with the break of day, after having removed the barrier, and so opened the entrance to the passage, clothed in the rags with which he had stopped the leak, having round his waist Clubin's belt, and seventy-five thousand francs, standing upright in the newly-repaired boat, by the side of the rescued engine, with a favourable breeze and a tranquil sea, Gilliatt pushed off from the Douvres.

He steered straight for Guernsey. As he left the rocks, anyone who had witnessed his departure might have heard him hum, in a low voice, the air of "Bonnie Dundee."

END OF PART II.

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# THIRD PART.

## BOOK I.

### *NIGHT AND THE MOON.*

#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE HARBOUR BELL.

THE Saint Sampson of to-day is almost a town. Forty years back it was little more than a village.

Spring had arrived, and the long winter evenings were over, but the inhabitants were not out of bed long after sunset. Saint Sampson was one of those ancient parishes within whose precincts the curfew-bell had been heard for many years, and which had retained its custom of extinguishing its lights at an early hour. They went to bed with the sun, and rose with him again. These old Norman villages are regular hen-roosts in that respect. We may mention that, in Saint Sampson, with the exception of a few wealthy families amongst the townspeople, the population is composed of quarrymen and carpenters. There is a great deal of ship-repairing going in the harbour. All day long stone is being quarried or beams shaped; here the pickaxe is at work, there the hammer and chisel—one continued fashioning of timber or working of stone. Towards night the workpeople, overcome with fatigue, sink into a heavy, dull sleep. Heavy work produces heavy sleep.

One evening, at the commencement of the month of May, after having for some minutes gazed upon the moon rising from behind the trees, and listened to Déruchette's footfalls as she walked alone in the garden enjoying the fresh air, Mess. Lethierry retired to his little room which looked upon the port, and went to bed. Douce and Grace had already retired to rest. With the exception of Déruchette, everyone in the house

was sound asleep. All Saint Sampson slept. Doors and shutters were carefully closed. There were no passers-by in the streets. A few scattered lights twinkling in the garret windows showed that the servants were going to rest. It had already struck nine from the old Roman belfry, clothed in ivy, which shares with the church of Saint Brelade, in Jersey, the quaint reputation of having for its date four ones—IIII.—meaning eleven hundred and eleven.

Mess. Lethierry's popularity in Saint Sampson had sprung into being from his success. When that had fled, a blank remained. It would seem that the reputation of ill-luck spreads rapidly, and that persons who have been unfortunate are afflicted by a sort of moral plague, so rapidly do their neighbours put them in quarantine. The young men belonging to the better-class families fought shy of Déruchette. The inhabitants of Les Bravées lived such an isolated life that they had not even heard of the great event which was convulsing Saint Sampson.

The rector of the parish, the Reverend Joë Ebenezer Caudray, had become a wealthy man. His uncle, the well-known Dean of Saint Asaph, had recently died in London. The sloop *Cashmere* had brought the news from England that very morning. The *Cashmere* was to return to Southampton the next day at noon, and the Rector—so report stated—was to take his passage in her, in order to be present at the opening of the will. All day long Saint Sampson had been ringing the changes on the Reverend Ebenezer—the death of his uncle, his approaching departure, and his possible future rise in the Church. Only in one house, into which this information had not penetrated, there had been no gossip. This house was Les Bravées. Mess. Lethierry had turned into his hammock “all standing,” as sailors term it. Since the loss of the *Durande*, his usual recourse had been his hammock. The prisoner has recourse to his pallet, and Mess. Lethierry was the prisoner of disappointment. To go to bed was a truce—a breathing-time gained—a suspension of ideas. Did he sleep? No. Did he lie awake? No. Properly speaking, for two months and a half—for it was two months and a half since his misfortune occurred—Mess. Lethierry had been in a partial state of somnambulism, and had hardly yet come to himself. He was in that misty and confused state which only those have experienced who have endured great and sudden affliction. He passed his days in dreaming and his nights in planning. Some days he would remain all the afternoon at the window of his room, gazing on the harbour, with his head bent down and his elbows

supported on the stone window-sill, his face resting on his hands, his back turned to the whole world, and his eyes firmly fixed on the old iron ring to which the *Durande* used to be moored, and half wondering why it had become so rusty.

Mess. Lethierry no longer lived; he simply existed.

The stoutest hearts, when deprived of their object in life, will come to this. It is the result of a life from which all interest has been removed. Life is a journey, of which the idea is the guide-book. When there is no guide-book the journey ceases.

Power dies when there is no end to be attained.

Fate has a hidden discretionary power. It can even touch with its rod our moral being. Despair is the poverty of the soul. The strongest minds only can continue the struggle—the struggle for what — ?

Mess. Lethierry was always meditating—if absorption in the depth of an abyss of trouble can be called meditation. Broken sentences sometimes burst from his lips, such as these: “Nothing remains for me but to ask leave from Above to quit this.” Let us note a certain contradiction in this nature, as strangely complex as the ocean, of which Mess. Lethierry was the product, and that is, that he did not seek relief in prayer.

To be helpless is to have a certain strength. In the presence of our two greatest blindnesses—nature and fate—man has ever found his strongest support in prayer.

In his hour of terror man seeks for aid, and his anxiety forces him to his knees.

But, for all that, Mess. Lethierry did not pray.

During the days of his prosperity God existed for him, as we may say, in flesh and blood.

Lethierry would hold converse with Him, call upon Him to witness his promises, and, as it were, stretch out his hand to Him; but, in his misfortune—and his was no exceptional case—he had entirely slipped away from his God.

This too often happens when you endow the Deity with human qualities. In his state of depression and despondency there was but one source of consolation for Mess. Lethierry, and this he found in the smile of *Déruchette*. Beyond that smile all was black and gloomy. For some time past—no doubt, on account of the loss of the *Durande*, and the blow that it had inflicted on them—this charming smile had become more rare. She seemed to be much preoccupied; her soft, birdlike childishness had disappeared. In the morning, at gunfire, she would no longer greet the rising sun with a curtsey and a “Bang! Good-





" Every evening she walked in the garden "

*The Foilers of the Sea*

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morning; have the kindness to step in." Sometimes there was an absolute air of sadness about her, but she made every effort to cheer up Mess. Lethierry and to draw him away from his troubles; but her cheerfulness faded away day by day, and became, as it were, covered with dust, like the butterfly through whose body a pin has been driven. Let us add that, whether through sorrow for her uncle's sorrow—for there are certain griefs which have the power to communicate themselves—she seemed now to be drawn greatly towards religion. In the days of the former rector, the Rev. Jaquemin Hérode, she had contented herself with going to church four times in the year. But now she was most regular in her attendance. She never missed a single service, either on Sundays or Thursdays. The godly in the parish remarked this change for the better with great delight—for it is a great thing when a young girl, who runs so many risks from the assiduities of men, turns her thoughts towards heaven. This makes poor fathers and mothers more at ease with regard to courting and similar things.

Every evening that the weather permitted she walked for an hour or two in the garden of Les Bravées. Then she seemed as melancholy and lonely as Mess. Lethierry. Déruchette was always the last in bed, which, however, did not prevent Grace and Douce from watching her a little bit, with that mania for playing the spy which is inherent to the minds of domestics. It is a change from the monotony of service to watch your master and mistress a little.

As for Mess. Lethierry, in the absent state of his mind, he hardly noticed these alterations in Déruchette's habits. Besides, it had never been his custom to play the part of a duenna. He never even remarked the punctuality with which she attended the services at the parish church. Still retaining his prejudices against the clergy, he certainly would not have looked upon this alteration with any pleasure.

It was not because his own nature was not undergoing a change. Grief is a cloud which alters all things very much. Robust natures, as we have before said, are often utterly cast down by great, unexpected misfortunes. Strong characters, like that of Lethierry, feel reaction very severely. Despair has moments in which it rises. From the depths of misery we rise to simple dejection; from dejection to affliction, and from affliction to melancholy. Melancholy is the twilight of grief; suffering diffuses itself in it, and becomes a kind of gloomy pleasure.



Melancholy is the pleasure of being sad.

These mournful states of mind were not suited to Lethierry. These delicate shades of grief were neither fitted to his character or his temperament. But, at this moment that we meet him again, the access of his first despair had, for more than a week, been wearing away, though it still left him sad and depressed. He had lost much of his gloom, and he was no longer crushed to the earth. A certain perception of events and occurrences had come back to him, and he had commenced to experience that phenomenon which may be termed the return to reality.

Thus, in the day, seated in the large ground-floor room, he did not listen to conversation, but yet he heard it. Grace, one day, came in triumph to tell Déruchette that Mess. Lethierry had opened the cover of a newspaper. This half-acceptance of the realities of life is in itself a good sign—it is the convalescence of the mind. Heavy afflictions produce stupor, and it is by entering into the little acts of everyday life that men come back to themselves. This improvement, however, is, at first, merely an aggravation of the original evil. The dreamy condition in which the mind has been plunged deadens grief. Trouble had dulled his perceptions; but, as he aroused himself from this state, he saw more clearly—his wounds begin to smart again. Every object about him appears to bring back his sorrow to his recollection. His memory reflected everything once more. He was better, and yet worse. Such was Mess. Lethierry's condition. In returning to full consciousness his sufferings had only become more acute.

What had brought Mess. Lethierry back to the world of reality was a sudden shock.

Let us tell the reader what this shock was.

One afternoon, between the 15th and 20th of April, a double-knock at the front door had announced the arrival of the postman. Douce opened the door, and took in a letter.

This letter came from across the sea; it was addressed to Mess. Lethierry, and bore the post-mark of Lisbon.

Douce had taken the letter to Mess. Lethierry, who was in his room. He took it from her hand mechanically, and placed it on the table without even looking at it.

For a whole week it remained there untouched.

One morning, however, Douce said to Mess. Lethierry: "Shall I take the dust off your letter?"

Lethierry seemed to wake up.

"Yes, yes; you are right," answered he. 'Then he broke the seal, and read as follows:—

"At Sea, March 10th.

"To Mess. Lethierry, of Saint Sampson.

"I am sure you will be pleased to hear from me. I am on the *Tamaulipas*, bound for the port of No-Return. There is, amongst the crew, a sailor named Ahier Tostevin, of Guernsey, who, on his return, will have some strange news to give you. I take advantage of our having met the ship *Hernan Cortez*, bound for Lisbon, to send you this letter.

"You will be astonished. I am an honest man, after all—as honest, at least, as Sieur Clubin.

"I ought to believe that you know everything that has happened; but, for all that, I had better repeat it. This is it:

"I have refunded you your money.

"I had borrowed from you, in rather an irregular manner, I confess, fifty thousand francs. Before leaving Saint Malo I handed to your confidential agent, Sieur Clubin, three bank-notes of one thousand pounds each, which amounts to seventy-five thousand francs.

"You will, doubtless, consider this as a settlement in full of my debt to you. Sieur Clubin has defended your interests, and received your money with a very great display of energy. In fact, he showed so much zeal in the matter, that I thought it best to send you these lines warning you of what had taken place.

"Your other confidential man,

"RANTAINÉ.

"P.S.—Sieur Clubin had a revolver in his hand during our interview, which accounts for my having no receipt."

Touch a torpedo, place your hand upon a fully-charged Leyden jar, and you may have some idea of the effect that this letter had upon Mess. Lethierry. Beneath this envelope, on this sheet of paper, folded in four, to which he had at first paid so little attention, a tempest was concealed. He recognised both the writing and the signature; as to the statement that the letter contained, he knew nothing about it. The excitement, however, at once cleared his brain.

The statement that Rantaine had given Clubin seventy-five thousand francs for him was a riddle, but it set his mind to work at once, and proved useful in rousing him from his lethargy. Conjecture is a healthy occupation for the mind. The reasoning faculties are aroused, and logic is called into play. For some

time past public opinion in Guernsey regarding Clubin had somewhat changed—the man who for so many years had maintained so high a reputation for honour and integrity. People now began to ask questions about and to express doubts concerning him; wagers were even laid on the event. Some light had been in various ways thrown on the matter, and Clubin's character began to become clearer—that is to say, much blacker.

An official enquiry had been held at Saint Malo regarding the disappearance of the coastguardsman No. 619, but here legal perspicacity had gone on a false track, as often happens. It had started with the notion that the coastguardsman had been kidnapped by Captain Zuela, and embarked on board the *Tamaulipas* for Chili.

This injurious supposition had led to a series of errors. The blind eye of justice had been turned upon Rantaine; but, whilst plodding along the road, the authorities had hit upon other traces. The mysterious affair was much complicated. Clubin had come upon the scene. A coincidence—perhaps a direct connection—had been traced between the sailing of the *Tamaulipas* and the loss of the *Durande*. At the drinking-shop at the Dinan Gate, where Clubin thought that he was not known, he had been recognised, and the keeper of the wine-shop had talked. Clubin had bought a bottle of brandy; who was it for?

The gunmaker of the Rue Saint Vincent had talked. Clubin had bought a revolver. What was it for? The landlord of the Auberge Jean had talked. Clubin had been absent at odd times and seasons. Captain Gertrais Gaboureau had talked. Clubin had insisted on sailing, although warned not to do so, and knowing well that he would steam right into a fog. The crew of the *Durande* had talked; the opportunity of securing freight had been lost, and the stowage of the cargo badly arranged—a piece of negligence easy to comprehend, if the captain had made up his mind to lose his ship. The passenger from Guernsey had talked. Clubin had evidently believed that he had struck on the Hanois. The inhabitants of Torteval had talked. Clubin had been there some days before the loss of the *Durande*, and had gone off in the direction of Plainmont, which is near the Hanois. He had started with a travelling-bag, and come back without one. The birds'-nesters had talked, and their story seemed to have some reference to Clubin's disappearance—always supposing that smugglers and not ghosts were the denizens of the deserted house. The haunted house at Plain-

mont had even talked, for people who were determined to sift the affair to the bottom had climbed into it, and had found the—what? Why, the very travelling-bag that Clubin had been seen carrying. The authorities of Torteval had taken possession of it and caused it to be opened. It was found to hold a stock of provisions, a telescope, a chronometer, and some men's clothes and linen, marked with Clubin's initials. In all the circles of Guernsey and Saint Malo, where the matter was discussed, it began to assume the appearance of some attempted fraud. When all the clues were gathered up together, there seemed to have been an entire disdain of good advice, an utter neglect of the risk of steaming through a fog, neglect of freight, a bottle of brandy, a drunken helmsman, the captain taking his place, an unfortunate turn of the rudder to the right, and it was all over. The heroism of refusing to quit the wreck began to look like a piece of planned roguery. Clubin had certainly been deceived as to what rock he was on. If dishonesty and an intention to cast away the vessel was once admitted, it was easy to see why the captain had selected the Hanois rocks, as from them it would be most easy to gain the shore by swimming; then to lurk in the haunted house until an opportunity of flight offered itself. The discovery of the travelling-bag formed the last link. But how this affair was connected with the other one—that of the disappearance of the coastguardsman—no one could conjecture. That there was some connecting link was certain, but that was all. That there was some tragic drama, in which both the coastguard No. 619 and Clubin had played a part, was beyond all doubt, but all was veiled in obscurity. The wreck of the *Durande* was not all—a revolver was a prominent matter in the affair. Perhaps this was connected with the disappearance of the Preventive man. The scent of the public is just and exact; its instinct excels in the welding together of morsels and fragments so as to form the truth. Still, from amongst these facts, could there be drawn a wilful running of the vessel upon a rock? There were grave doubts on this point.

A ship is not wilfully wrecked out of mere wantonness. Men do not incur all the dangers of fog, rock, swimming, hiding away, and flight, without some motive. What motive could Clubin have had?

They could see pretty plainly what he had done, but were at a loss to assign a motive for it.

So that a shadow of doubt still remained in some minds.

Where there is no motive, it seems as if there could be no act.

There was a gap, but Rantaine's letter seemed to bridge it over.

This letter gave the reason for Clubin's act.

Seventy-five thousand francs to be stolen!

Rantaine was the moving spring; he had come down from the clouds with a lantern in his hand.

His letter let in a ray of light on to the obscure affair. It explained all, and announced the arrival of another witness, in the shape of Abier Tostevin. It also suggested the way in which the revolver had been used. Rantaine was, no doubt, thoroughly acquainted with everything, and his letter enabled others to put their fingers upon the key-note of the mystery.

There could be no possible extenuation for Clubin's shameful conduct. He had premeditated the wreck—this was proved by the travelling-bag found in the haunted house. Even supposing him innocent, and the wreck to have been entirely the work of an accident, would he not, at the last moment, when he had decided not to quit the wreck, have given the seventy-five thousand francs for Mess. Lethierry to some of the crew who were about to escape in the long-boat? The evidence was overwhelming. But now what had become of Clubin?

He had probably fallen a victim to his own mistake, and perished on the Douvres.

All this careful construction of conjecture, which was not very far from the truth, had occupied Mess. Lethierry's mind for several days. The letter from Rantaine had done him good service in one way: it had set him thinking. He was, at first, utterly overwhelmed with surprise; then he made an effort to consider the matter in all its bearings; then he made another effort—this time a more difficult one—and that was to make a searching enquiry. He was induced to listen to people, and even to enter into conversation with them. Up to a certain point he had become practical. His mind had recovered its coherence, and was almost cured. He had emerged from the dazed state in which he had been for so long. Rantaine's letter, even admitting that Mess. Lethierry had entertained any hopes of future restitution, took away his last chance. In addition to the wreck of the *Durande* was this new catastrophe—the loss of seventy-five thousand francs. This letter showed him the depth of his ruin. From this arose a fresh—a new and very painful sensation, of which we have spoken of. He now began to take an interest in his household, what was to be done in future, and

how matters were to be arranged—things to which, for the last two months, he had paid no attention. All these trifles irritated him with their pin-pricks a thousand times worse than any serious misfortune; to have to endure misfortune, which seemed to come item by item, and to dispute its advance inch by inch, is a terrible task. Before, the catastrophe had crushed him; now it worried him. Misfortune, coming in one fell swoop, can be endured, but to be struck by its dust and fragments is hard to bear. Humiliation aggravates the blow. A second state of misery succeeds the first with even a more terrible appearance. The winding-sheet is changed to fusty tatters. To feel that you have fallen from the position you have occupied is terrible; to have been ruined is simple enough. A violent shock, a cruel turn of fate—a catastrophe once for all. Be it so; we submit to it, and all is finished. You are ruined! Good! You are dead! Not at all; you are living. The next day you perceive this. How? By the pricking of pins. Someone passes you and takes no notice of you. Tradesmen's bills pour in. One of your enemies passes you with a smile on his lips. Perhaps he is thinking of Arnal's last joke, and not of you; but it is all the same. The joke would not have appeared so funny to him had you not been ruined. You learn your decadence in the looks of indifference that are cast upon you. Friends who used to sit at your dinner-table begin to say that three courses, to a man in your position, was a piece of extravagance. Everyone can now see your faults. Ungrateful people, having nothing more to look to, take no pains to hide their feelings. Every fool knew well enough what was going to happen. Evil speakers tear your character to shreds; some go a step further, and profess to pity you. Then there are a hundred petty details. After grief comes nausea. You used to drink wine; you must now take to cider. Two servants—that was always one too much. You must reduce your establishment. What do you want with flowers in your garden?—much better plant potatoes. You used to give presents of fruit to your friends—it would have been wiser to have sent it to market. As to the poor, you must think no longer of charity, for are you not poor yourself? Then there is the painful question of dress. What a punishment to have to refuse your wife a new ribbon! It seems so mean. She may perhaps say, "You have taken all the flowers out of my garden, and now you take them out of my bonnet." Ah! and how terrible to have to doom her to wear shabby dresses. There is silence now around your table. You imagine that your family

think harshly of you. Faces that you once loved look coldly on you. This is what is meant by going down-hill. Falling at once is nothing—it is merely the fiery furnace; but to go down gradually is like being burnt at a slow fire.

The crash is Waterloo; a gradual decay is Saint Helena. Incarnate destiny, in the shape of a Wellington, retains some dignity, but how mean and paltry in the form of a Hudson Lowe. Fate becomes a paltry huckster. We see the man of Campo Formio quarrelling over a pair of silk stockings. Napoleon, growing little, dwarfs England at the same time.

All ruined men have passed through these phases—Waterloo and Saint Helena—in a different manner.

In that evening of May, Lethierry had left Déruchette rambling about the garden, and had gone sadly to bed.

All these paltry details, which are consequent on pecuniary disaster—all these trivial cases, which are at first hardly noticed, but which soon become a source of torment—were passing through his mind. A heavy load of trouble. Lethierry felt that he could never again struggle back to his former position. What could he do? What was to become of them all? What sacrifices would Déruchette have to submit to? Whom should he discharge—Douce or Grace? Would he have to dispose of Les Braves? Should he have to leave the island? To be nothing, where he had once held so high a position, was, in truth, a terrible fall. And then to know that all was over. To recall to mind all those trips connecting France with the Channel Islands. The departures on Tuesdays—the returns on Fridays; the people crowding to the harbour, the heavy cargoes, the industry, the prosperity; that direct service, of which he was so proud; that engine, obedient to man's will; the powerful boiler, the smoke—the whole reality of the thing. The steamer had been the whole compass; the needle pointing out the course, the vessel following it—one suggesting, the other executing. Where was she now? His Durande! His magnificent queen—the Durande! That mistress of the sea; that queen who had made him a king. To have been, in his own country, the man of ideas, the man of success, the man who had initiated a fresh system of navigation, and then to have to give it all up—to abdicate, in point of fact. To have ceased to exist; to become the mark of scoff and jest; in a word, a mere sack, emptied of its contents. To have become a thing of the past, after having been a coming man. To sink into becoming an object of pity for fools; to see routine, obstinacy, prejudice, selfishness, and ignorance triumph. To

see the antiquated cutters tediously crossing the sea ; to witness the resuscitation of all the old-world ideas ; to have wasted a lifetime ; to have been a shining light, and now to be extinguished for ever.

Ah ! what a sight was that lofty funnel, that huge cylinder, that pillar with its capital of smoke, that column, prouder than the one in the Place Vendôme—for in that there stands but the effigy of a man, whilst this was surmounted by progress. He had subdued the ocean and reduced the fickle sea to a certainty. And had all this taken place in this little island, in this little harbour, in this little town of Saint Sampson ? Yes, it had all taken place there ; and could it be that, having once taken place, it had vanished, never to return again.

All this retrospect of regret tortured Lethierry. There are sobs of the soul. He had never felt his misfortunes so keenly. A certain numbness followed this sharp access of pain. Overcome by his grief, he fell into an unquiet sleep.

He remained for about two hours with his eyes closed, sleeping little, thinking a great deal. Such states of mental torpor frequently hide severe workings of the brain, which are terribly wearying. About the middle of the night, a little before or a little after midnight, he roused himself from his state of semi-consciousness and opened his eyes.

Lethierry stared in astonishment, for, through the window that faced his hammock, he saw an extraordinary sight. Something strange and unexpected was there—it was the funnel of a steamboat.

In a moment he sprang from his hammock, ran to the window, opened it, and looked out. The funnel of the *Durande* towered up from its ancient moorings.

Its four chains, made fast to the bulwarks, supported it, on a vessel in which he could perceive, beneath the funnel, a dark mass of strange form.

Lethierry started, turned his back to the window, and dropped back on his hammock again.

Then he turned and again saw the vision as plainly as before.

An instant afterwards, quicker than a flash of lightning, he was out on the quay, with a lantern in his hand. At the old moorings of the *Durande* was a boat, having upon it, rather far back, a massive block, from which rose a straight funnel, right before the windows of *Les Bravées*, made fast to the iron ring. The bows of the boat stretched beyond the corner of the wall, and were level with the quay. There was no one on board.



All Guernsey would have recognised the boat by its quaint build. It was Gilliatt's barque.

Lethierry leaped on board, and hastened to the dark mass which stood beyond the mast. It was the engine. It was there complete, intact; placed squarely on its iron flooring. Not a rivet was wanting in the boiler; the axle of the paddle-wheels was standing on end and made fast near the boiler; the pump was there; nothing was lacking.

Lethierry examined the machinery.

Both moon and lantern helped him in his examination, and he minutely inspected every portion.

He noticed the two boxes on each side, and examined the axle. He looked into the little cabin, but it was empty. He returned to the engine, touched it, peeped into the boiler, kneeling down in order to be the better able to do so. He placed his lantern in the furnace, which almost gave the effect of a steamer with her fires alight.

Then he laughed wildly, and, with his eyes fixed on the engine, and his arms extended towards the chimney, he sprang to his feet, crying, "Help! help!"

The harbour bell was on the quay, a few paces off; he ran to it, grasped the chain, and pulled it fiercely.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE HARBOUR BELL ONCE MORE.

GILLIATT had, in fact, after a passage unmarked by incident, but rather slow, on account of the weight of his cargo, arrived at Saint Sampson after dark, and nearer ten o'clock than nine.

He had calculated the hour exactly. The half-flood tide had just come. There was plenty of water and the moon gave good light, so that he was able to enter the harbour without difficulty.

The little harbour slept peacefully in the moonlight. A few ships lay at their moorings, with their sails brailed up to the yards, but with no lights. At the further end were some vessels undergoing repairs, which had been careened—large hulks, dismantled and stripped, with their planking open in various parts, lifting high the ends of their timbers, and looking like great dead beetles with their legs sticking up in the air.

As soon as he had passed the mouth of the harbour, Gilliatt closely examined the port and the quay. There was no light at

Les Bravées or elsewhere. There was no one about, except, perhaps, a man going or returning from the rectory. Nor was it possible to be sure even of this, for the night obscured everything, and the moonlight only made objects more indistinct. The distance added to the indistinctness. At the time of which we write the rectory was situated at the other side of the harbour, where now stands a covered yard. Gilliatt had approached Les Bravées in silence, and had moored his boat to the ring to which the Durande used to be fastened.

He climbed over the bulwarks and was soon ashore.

Leaving the boat behind him, alongside of the quay, he turned the corner of the house, passed along a narrow street, turned down another, took no notice of the path that led to the Bû de la Rue, and in a few minutes found himself at the wall where the will mallow was in full flower, surrounded by holly, ivy, and nettles. Many a time, hidden behind these bushes, seated on a stone, in the long summer days, he had watched here for long hours, even for whole months, often inclined to scale the wall, over which he contemplated the garden of Les Bravées, and the two windows of a room which he could just see through the branches of the trees. He found his stone-seat, the bush, the low wall, with its angle, as quaint and secluded as ever. Like an animal seeking its den, he crept into it stealthily. Once seated there, he made no further movement. He looked round him, saw once more the garden, the paths, the flower-beds, the house, and the two windows of that room. The moonlight shone upon the spot he had so often seen in his dreams. He hated even to hear the sound of his own respiration, and did what he could to check it. He appeared to be gazing on some phantom Eden, and feared that all would fade away. He could hardly believe that he really saw all these things, and, if he did so, he felt that at any moment they might melt away and vanish. One breath might shatter the whole fabric of the vision. The thought made him tremble. Not far off, by the side of one of the paths was a green wooden bench. The reader will remember this bench.

Gilliatt looked up at the two windows. His thoughts turned to the sleeper in that chamber; behind that wall she was, no doubt, sleeping. He wished he was elsewhere, but would have sacrificed his life to maintain his present position. He pictured to himself her soft respiration, causing her bosom to rise and fall. It was she—that vision, that purity in the clouds, that form which was ever before his eyes, by night and by day; she was there. He thought of her asleep, so far removed from him,

and yet so near as to be almost within reach of his ecstasy. He thought of that ideal woman, buried in sleep, and, like himself, in the land of dreams; of that being so longed for, so distant, so intangible, her eyes closed, her cheek resting on her hand; of the mystery of the sleep of that ideal being; of the dreams which a dream might give rise to. He did not dare to let his thoughts go further, and yet they did so. He indulged himself in that disregard for the proprieties that reverie permits. The amount of femininity that an angel might possess disturbed his thoughts. The dark hour of the night emboldened his timid imagination to penetrate fearlessly into her chamber. He dreaded to profane the chaste sanctuary by looking on it even in imagination, and yet he could not refrain from doing so. His nerves quivered with a feeling of intense pain, as he pictured to himself her room; a petticoat on a chair, a mantle thrown on the carpet, a belt unfastened, a handkerchief. He pictured to himself her corset, with its laces trailing on the ground, her stockings, and her garters. His soul was wandering in realms Elysian.

Such realms are created for the enjoyment of a poor man like Gilliatt, not alone for the rich and great of this earth. There is a certain degree of passion, in which the soul is wrapped in a mantle of heavenly light. If the soul is rough and uncultured this is felt all the stronger; an uneducated mind is more susceptible to the power of dreams than a more cultivated intellect.

Delight is a plentitude, which runs over the brim of the cup like other pleasures. To gaze upon those windows was almost too much for Gilliatt.

Suddenly he perceived her, herself.

From a leafy clump of trees there issued forth a figure, a face—a lovely face—a trailing robe, moving slowly along beneath the light of the moon.

Gilliatt almost fainted; it was Déruchette. She came nearer; she stopped, she walked a few paces further off, and then stopped once more; then she came back and sat down on the wooden bench. The moon was behind the tree, and a few clouds wandered amongst the pale stars. The sea whispered to the shadows of night. The town slept; a thin mist rose on the horizon—all was soft and passive. Déruchette bent down her head; her eyes had that melancholy expression which took in all, and yet could see nothing; she was seated so that Gilliatt could see her profile, and had nothing on her head but a little cap, the strings of which were untied, which showed the commencement of her

hair upon her delicate neck. Mechanically, she twisted one of the strings of her cap round her fingers. The twilight showed her hands clear and white as those of a statue. Her dress was one of those shades which seem at night to be a pure white. The trees stirred softly, as though they, too, felt the spell she cast around her.

The tips of her feet were just visible, and her eyelashes, resting upon her cheeks, seemed as if they were holding back a tear or retaining a thought that she desired to suppress. There was a lovely indecision in the movement of her arms, which had nothing to support them—a sort of floating appearance, which lent itself gracefully to her every movement. There was a gleam about her more than a radiance, and she resembled one of the graces more than a goddess. The folds of her dress were exquisite; her adorable face had an air of virginal candour about it. She was so close that it was almost terrifying. Gilliatt could hear her breathe.

A nightingale was singing in the depths of the bushes. The movements of the wind through the branches of the trees put in motion the ineffable silence of the night. In the twilight, *Déruchette*; divine and beautiful, appeared like a sane vision emanating from the rays of light and the perfumes that floated through the air. The widespread magic seemed to concentrate itself mysteriously in her, and she became its living manifestation. She seemed a flower, deriving her being from night and silence.

All this shadow and stillness, which floated so lightly round *Déruchette*, weighed heavily upon Gilliatt. He was bewildered. His feelings are beyond the power of words to express. Emotion is ever fresh, and the word is always sufficient. Emotion cannot be described. A feeling of intense joy is sometimes overwhelming. To see *Déruchette*—to see her very self, to look at her dress, to gaze on her cap, to watch her twisting her ribbon round her finger—was it possible to imagine anything like this? Was it possible for him to be as near her as he was, to hear her very respirations? If she breathed, why should not the stars breathe also? Every nerve in Gilliatt's body thrilled; he was the most miserable of men, and yet intoxicated with joy. He did not know what to do. The delicious delight of seeing her almost annihilated him. Was that indeed *Déruchette*, and was he so near to her? His feelings, in a state of utter bewilderment, were rivetted on this charming creature, as though she were some dazzling jewel. He looked at her neck and her hair. He

did not even venture to say to himself that all this would now be his, that before long—perhaps even to-morrow—he would have the right to take off that cap, to untie that ribbon. His audacity did not even go so far as to permit him to think of this. Touching in thought is like touching in reality. Love was with Gilliatt what honey is to the bear. His thoughts were confused; he knew not what influences were at work within him. The song of the nightingale still continued; he felt that he was breathing out his life.

The idea of rising up, leaping over the wall, and speaking to Déruchette, never entered his mind. Had it done so, he would have fled from the spot at once. If anything resembling a thought did come into his mind it was this—that Déruchette was here, that he wanted nothing more, and that eternity had begun.

A noise aroused them both—she from her thoughts, he from his rapture.

Someone had entered the garden. The trees prevented the person being seen, but the tread was that of a man.

Déruchette raised her eyes.

The step came nearer, then ceased entirely. The person who was walking had stopped. He was evidently close now. The path, by the side of which was the bench, passed between two clumps of trees. The intruder was evidently then but a few paces from the seat.

The thickly - interwoven branches were so arranged that Déruchette could see the new comer, but Gilliatt could not catch a glimpse of him. The moon cast a shadow on the ground reaching to the bench. Gilliatt could see the shadow.

He looked at Déruchette.

She had grown very pale; her mouth was slightly open, and she evidently suppressed a cry of surprise. She had half risen from her seat, and sunk back again. Her attitude betokened fascination, mingled with a wish to escape. Her surprise was a mixture of enchantment and timidity. She had the ghost of a smile on her lips, and a tear glistened in her eye. She seemed as if the presence of the Unknown had wrought a change in her; as if the being before her was not a denizen of this earth. The reflection of an angel was in her gaze.

The newcomer, who was but a shadow to Gilliatt, spoke. A voice, softer than the tones of a woman, came from behind the trees; but yet it was the voice of a man. Gilliatt heard these words:—

“Mademoiselle, I see you in church every Sunday and

Thursday; they tell me that formerly you were not so frequent a visitor. This is a remark that has been made to me. I ask your pardon for repeating it. I have never spoken to you—it was my duty—but I come to speak to you to-day, for it is still my duty. It is right that I should speak to you first. The *Cashmere* sails to-morrow. This is my reason for coming here. Every evening you walk in your garden. It would be wrong of me to have learned this habit of yours, were I not inspired by the thought that I am. Mademoiselle, you are poor; I am rich, since this morning. Will you accept me for your husband?"

Déruchette clasped her hands together, and gazed on the speaker, silent, her eyes earnestly fixed upon him, and trembling from head to foot. The voice went on: "I love you. God did not create the heart of man to be silent, since He has promised him eternity; it is because He does not will that he should be alone. There is for me but one woman upon earth, and that is you. I think of you as of a prayer. My faith is in God, and my hope in you. Such wings as I have, you carry. You are my life, and already my heaven."

"Monsieur," answered Déruchette, "there is no one to answer in the house."

Once more the voice continued:

"Yes, I have had a sweet dream. Dreams are not forbidden us by God. You appear to me like a glory. Mademoiselle, I love you passionately. In my eyes you are holy innocences. I know that at this hour all your household is in bed, but I could choose no other time. Do you remember that text of Scripture which someone read in our presence? It was in the 25th chapter of Genesis; I have often thought of it since. The Rev. Mr. Hérode said to me: 'You must marry a rich wife;' I replied 'No, I must have a poor wife.' I speak to you without venturing to draw closer to you. I would go even further back if it was your desire that my shadow should not even touch your feet. You are my sovereign. If it is your will you will come to me. I love and I wait. You are the living embodiment of a blessing."

"Monsieur," stammered Déruchette, "I did not know that anyone had noticed me on Sundays and Thursdays."

The voice continued:

"We can do nothing against angelical influences. All the law is love. Marriage is Canaan. You are the promised beauty. O thou, full of grace, I salute thee!"

Déruchette replied:

"I did not think to do more harm than those other people who were punctual."

The voice continued :

"God has shown His intentions in the flowers, in the dawn, in the spring, and He has ordered us to love. You are beautiful in this sacred gloom of the night. This garden has been cultivated by your hands, and your breath breathes in all its perfumes. Mademoiselle, the affinities of our souls do not depend on us alone. We are not to blame for them. You were there, that is all; I was there, and that was all. My only feeling was that I loved you. Sometimes my eyes were raised to yours. I was wrong, but how could I help it? All happened through my looking at you. I was unable to restrain myself; there are strange impulses which are beyond our powers. The first of all temples is the heart of man. To have your spirit in my house—to this terrestrial paradise—do I aspire. Will you consent? As long as I was poor I was silent. I know your age; you are twenty-one. I am twenty-six. I leave to-morrow; if you reject me I shall never return again. You will give me your promise to be mine, will you not? My eyes have, in spite of myself, more than once put this question to you. I love you—oh, reply to me! (I will speak to your uncle as soon as he is able to see me, but I come first to you. It is to Rebecca that I plead for Rebecca, unless, indeed, you do not love me."

Déruchette bent her head, murmuring :

"Oh, I adore him!"

She spoke so low that only Gilliatt caught them. She remained with her face bent down, as though, by concealing it, she hoped to conceal her thoughts.

There was a brief silence.

There was not a quiver upon the leaves on the trees.

It was that solemn, peaceful hour, when the sleep of external objects unites with the sleep of man, and night seems to listen to the beating of Nature's heart. In the midst of this solitude, like a harmony which makes the silence more complete, the soft murmur of the sea could be heard.

The voice continued :

"Mademoiselle?"

Déruchette started.

Once more the voice spoke :

"Alas, I wait!"

"What do you wait for?"

"Your answer."

"God has heard it," said Déruchette.

Then the voice grew almost sonorous, and yet more sweet than ever, and these words issued from the leaves as from a burning bush.

"You are my betrothed; rise up, then, and come to me. Let the blue sky, studded with stars, be the witness of the acceptance of your soul by mine, and let our first kiss be mingled with the firmament.

Déruchette rose; for a moment she remained motionless, looking straight before her, doubtless into the eyes of another. Then, with slow steps, with her head erect, her arms hanging by her side, she stepped towards the trees and was lost to sight. A moment afterwards, in the place of one shadow on the gravel, there were two; they mingled together, and at his feet Gilliatt could see repeated the shadowy embrace.

At certain moments time flies from us as the sands run through the glass, and we have no perception of their flight. The fond pair, who were ignorant of the presence of a witness—and the witness who could not see them, but knew of their presence—remained for some minutes in this mysterious state of suspense. It would be impossible to say how long this lasted. All of a sudden, a wild uproar was heard in the distance, a voice cried out, "Help, help!" and the harbour bell began to ring. It is probable that in their wild transports of delight they did not hear this tumult.

The bell continued to peal. Had anyone searched for Gilliatt in the angle of the wall, they would have found him no longer there.



## BOOK II

## GRATITUDE AND DESPOTISM.

## CHAPTER I.

## JOY SURROUNDED BY PAIN.

MESS. LETHIERRY rang the bell violently, and then stopped, abruptly. A man was coming round the corner of the quay: it was Gilliatt. Mess. Lethierry ran up to him, or, to speak more correctly, flung himself upon him, and clasped his hands, gazing into his eyes in silence. It was that sort of silence which forebodes an explosion which is struggling to burst forth. Then, pulling him and shaking him, thrusting him before him, he got him into the ground-floor room of the *Les Bravées*, and, pushing back with his heel the door, which remained half open, he sat, or rather fell, into a chair by the side of a table, which was lighted up by the moonbeams, which also shone upon Gilliatt's white face, and, in a voice in which laughter struggled with sobs, he exclaimed: "Ah! my son—the man with the bagpipe—Gilliatt; I knew well enough that it was you that had done it. There was your old boat; tell me all about it. So you went there, did you? A hundred years ago they would have burnt you alive for a wizard. It did look like magic. There is not a screw missing. I have looked at everything, examined everything, and handled everything. I guessed that the paddle-wheels were in those two boxes—and so here you are at last. I looked for you in your cabin; then I rang the bell; I said, 'Where is he, that I may eat him up?' You must agree with me, that strange things have happened. And so it has all come back from the *Douvres Rocks*. You have brought me back life. Thunder! you are an angel! Yes, yes, yes, it is my engine! No one could believe it; they will see it, and will say, 'It is not true!' and it is all there—not a pin missing, not a tap gone; the feed-pipe has not moved an inch. It is incredible that there should be no more damage. A little oil will set it all to rights. But how did you do it? Just fancy the *Durande* getting to work again! The axletrees look

as if it had been taken to pieces by a jeweller. Tell me, on your word of honour, am I mad or not?" He got up from his chair, breathed hard, and continued: "Swear it to me! What a revolution! I pinched myself to be certain that I was not dreaming. You are my son, my boy, my providence! Ah, my son! and so you went to fetch me my devil of an engine, in the open sea, among those cut-throat rocks. I have seen strange things in my day, but never things that come up to that. I have seen the Parisians, who are real devils, but they never could have done that. It was harder work than pulling down the Bastille. I have seen the guachos at work in the Pampas, with a bent bit of wood for a plough, a bundle of thorns tied with a leather strap for a harrow, dragged about by a leather strap; and with these they get a harvest of wheat, with the grains as big as nuts. But that is a trifle compared to what you have done. You have worked a miracle—a real one—you have. Ah! you rogue; come and embrace me. All the success of the place will be due to you. How they will talk of it at Saint Sampson! I shall go to work at once to rebuild the boat. It is wonderful the crank is all right. Gentlemen, he has been to the Douvres—I say, to the Douvres—all by himself to the Douvres, and has come back not a pin the worse! You know it has been proved that she was run on them on purpose. Clubin wrecked the Durande to rob me of my money which he ought to have brought me. He made Tangrouille drunk. It is too long a story to tell now; but I will do so some day—all about his piratical tricks. But the scoundrel paid for it, for he was not able to get off. There is a God, after all! What a scoundrel he was! But now, Gilliatt, no time to be lost—puff, puff! Put the irons in the fire, and we will rebuild the Durande. I will make her twenty feet longer this time. They build boats much larger now. I will buy the wood at Dantzic and at Brême. Now that I have the engine, they will give me credit, and confidence will be restored."

Mess. Lethierry paused, lifted his eyes with the air of one who sees the heavens through the ceiling, and muttered between his teeth, "Yes, yes, there is one!"

Then he placed the middle finger of his right hand between his eyebrows, and tapped his forehead with the nail—a movement which indicated that he had a project of some kind.

"It is all right, but, to have done things on a large scale, a little cash would have been handy. Ah! if I only had my three bank notes which that scoundrel Rantaine gave me, and which that thief Clubin stole—my seventy-five thousand francs!"

Still keeping silence, Gilliatt sought for something in his pocket, which he placed before Mess. Lethierry; it was the leather belt which he had brought back. He opened it and spread it out on the table. In the moonlight the name "Clubin," could be plainly read; he drew from the pocket in the belt, a box, and from the box, three pieces of folded paper, which he opened and handed to the old man. Mess. Lethierry examined them. It was light enough to read the figures "1000" and the words "*one thousand*," easily. Mess. Lethierry took the three notes, looked at them, looked at Gilliatt, remained silent a moment, as though dumb-founded, and then burst forth again like an eruption after an explosion.

"This, too! Why, you are a prodigy! My bank-notes, all three of them!—a thousand pounds each—seventy-fivethousand francs! You must have been to hell to fetch them! It is Clubin's belt, sure enough; I can read his infernal name on it. Gilliatt brings back the engine and the money too. This is news for the papers. I will buy wood of the best quality. I guess that you found Clubin's carcass stowed away in some hole. We will get our pine from Dantzia, and our oak from Brême, and we will make a good job of it—oak inside, pine outside. In old times they did not build so well, and yet their ships lasted longer; for the wood was better seasoned, because there was not such a great demand. Perhaps we will use elm for the hull. Elm is good for the parts under water—to be sometimes dry and sometimes wet rots the timbers. Elm always requires to be wet. What a splendid vessel the new *Durande* will be! There will be no more law business; I shall require no credit. I have got the cash now. Was there ever such a fellow as this Gilliatt! I was aground; done for—a dead man, and he has set me on my legs again! And there was I, never thinking of him! He had entirely slipped my memory. Everything has come back to me now. My poor boy! Ah! By the way, you know that you are to marry *Déruchette*?"

Gilliatt staggered back against the wall like one who has received a heavy blow, and, in a low but perfectly distinct voice, he said, "No!"

Mess. Lethierry started.

"What do you mean by 'No'?"

Gilliatt answered, "I do not love her!"

Mess. Lethierry walked across to the window, opened it, and closed it, came back to the table, took up the three bank-notes, folded them, and put the little iron box on the top of them, seized Clubin's belt, and hurled it violently against the wall, and

- said, "There is something under all this." Then, thrusting his hands deeply into his pockets, he exclaimed: "You do not love Déruchette? Then it was for me that you played on the bagpipe?" Gilliatt, still leaning against the wall, grew pale as a man at his last gasp. As he grew paler, the face of Mess. Lethierry grew redder. "A nice sort of an idiot this is! He does not love Déruchette. Well, begin to love her as soon as possible, for she shall marry no one but you. What ridiculous story are you telling me? Do you think that I shall believe you? Are you ill? If you are, send for the doctor, but do not talk such rubbish. It is not possible that you have already had the time to quarrel with her. It is true that lovers are always fools. Come, come—tell me your reasons—that is, if you have any. One does not act like a goose without having some motive. But, there, I have got cotton in my ears, and perhaps I did not hear you correctly. Repeat what you said."

Gilliatt answered, "I said 'No.'"

- "He said 'No,' and the brute sticks to it. There is something wrong with you, that is certain. You said 'No.' Here is a bit of stupidity, such as we seldom hear of in this world. Why, they have given people the shower-bath for less than this. And so you do not love Déruchette? Then it is all for love of an old fellow like me that you have done all you have done. It was for the sake of papa's good books that you, must off to the Dôuvres, where you were frozen, burnt, and half killed with hunger and thirst; where you fed on the vermin of the sea, and had fog, rain, and wind for a bedroom, and brought me back my engine, as you might bring back to a pretty woman the canary-bird that had escaped out of her cage. And the storm that we had three days ago—do you think I have forgotten all about that? You had a bit of luck there. And it was alongside of my old craft that you stroked, cut, turned, twisted, and dragged about, and filed and sawed, and carpentered and planed, and performed more miracles, all alone, than the saints in heaven could have done. Ah, you idiot! you disturbed me enough once with your bagpipes—they call it a *biniau* in Brittany—always the same tune too, looby! And so you do not love Déruchette? What on earth is the matter with you? I recollect it all now. I was in the corner. Déruchette said, "I will marry him," and marry you she shall! And so you do not love her! The more I think of it, the less I understand of it. Are you a fool, or am I? And there you stand, without saying a word. You cannot be allowed to do all that you have done, and then, at the end, to

say, 'I don't love Déruchette.' You have no right to put folks under an obligation, and then to make them in a rage. Well, if you do not marry her, she shall die an old maid.' Besides, I have need of you. You shall be the pilot of the *Durande*. Do you imagine that I am going to lose sight of you again? Ta, ta, ta; not so, my good fellow, you must not think I am going to let you go any more. Where shall I find such a thorough bred sailor as you? You are the man for me. Why don't you speak?"

But the harbour bell had roused the inhabitants of the house and the neighbourhood. Douce and Grace had risen, and come into the room on the ground, silent, and filled with surprise. Grace had a candle in her hand. A group of neighbours, town-folk, peasants, and sailors, who had come out in haste, were standing on the quay, looking in wonder at the funnel of the *Durande* in Gilliatt's boat. Some of them, hearing Lethierry's voice in the lower room, began to slip in through the half-open door. Between the faces of the old women appeared the head of *Sieur Landoys*, who always had the luck to find himself in places from which he would not, for worlds, have been absent. Great pleasure always demands a certain amount of publicity. The support which a crowd affords, although it may be of rather a vague nature, pleases people. *Mess. Lethierry* at once perceived that he had an audience, and he accepted the situation with pleasure. "Ah, you are all there, are you. All the better, you have heard the news. There is the man that has brought it all back. Good-day, *Sieur Landoys*! Just now, when I woke up, the first thing that caught my eye was the funnel. It was right under my window. There is not a nail missing. They have engravings of Napoleon's great feats, but I think more of his than of the battle of Austerlitz. You are just out of bed, my good friends, and the *Durande* came in whilst you were asleep. While you were tying on your nightcaps, and blowing out your candles, some people were making real heroes of themselves; we are a parcel of cowards and idlers; we sit at home and nurse our rheumatisms, but, happily, there are some who have a bit of energy. This man of the *Bû de la Rue* has arrived from the *Douvres Rocks*. He has fished up the *Durande* from the bottom of the sea, and fished up my money out of *Clubin's* pocket from a deeper place than that. But how did you manage to do it? All the powers of devildom were against you—the wind and the sea—the sea and the wind. It is true that you are a bit of a sorcerer, and those who say it are no fools?"

The *Durande* is back once more; the tempests may do their worst now. We have cut the ground from under them. My friends, I announce to you that there was no shipwreck. I have examined all the machinery. It is as good as new—entire. The valves work as if they were on castors. You would think that they had been made yesterday. You know that the waste-water is carried away by a tube, which runs inside another one, through which passes the water to utilise the heat. Well, the two tubes are there as good as new; all the machinery—wheels and all. Ah! you shall marry her.”

“Marry the complete engine?” asked *Sieur Landoys*.

“No, the girl. Yes, the engine—both; he shall be my son-in-law in two ways. He shall be her captain. Good-day, Captain *Gilliatt*! for the *Durande* will soon have a captain. We are going to do plenty of business again; there will be trade, and cargoes of oxen and sheep. I'll back *Saint Sampson* against *London* yet! And there is the author of this wonderful feat. It was a strange adventure. On Saturday you will read all about it in *Father Mauger's* paper. Artful *Gilliatt* has proved himself worthy of his name. But what is the meaning of this gold here?”

*Mess. Lethierry* had just observed, through the opening of the lid, that there were some gold coins on the top of the bank-notes. He took it, opened it, emptied the money into his hand, and placed it on the table.

“For the poor, *Sieur Landoys*. Give it, in my name, to the constable of *Saint Sampson*. You remember *Rantaine's* letter that I showed you? Well, I have got the notes. Now we can buy oak and pine, and go to work at once shipbuilding; and, look here, do you remember the weather we had three days ago? What a murderous onslaught of rain and wind! The wind was blowing great guns. *Gilliatt* was on the *Douvres* all through it. This did not prevent his pulling the wreck to pieces, as I do my watch. Thanks to him, I am all right again. Old *Lethierry's* galley is going to run once more, ladies and gentlemen! A nutshell, with a couple of wheels and a pipe-stem. I was always in love with that invention, and said I will make one. That is many years back, and it came into my head in *Paris*, in the café at the corner of the *Rue Christine* and the *Rue Dauphine*, where I was reading a paper describing it. Do you know that *Gilliatt* would think nothing of putting the machinery of *Marly* into his pocket, and walking about with it! He is wrought-iron, tempered-steel—a diamond of the first water;

a thorough all-round sailor; a smith—a fellow worth more than the Prince of Hohenlohe. He is what I call a man of talent. We are not much by the side of him. You and I may call ourselves sea-dogs, but the sea-lion is there. Hurrah, Gilliatt! I do not know how he managed it, but certainly he must have been the Devil himself; and how can I do otherwise than give him *Déruchette*?"

*Déruchette*, for the last few minutes, had been in the room. She had not said a word since she entered. She had slipped in like a shadow, and taken a chair behind Mess. Lethierry without anyone taking any notice of her, whilst he was talking volubly and with excited gestures. A moment after her entrance another silent apparition had made its appearance. This was a man dressed in black, with a white cravat, and holding his hat in his hand, who stood in the half-opened doorway. There were now several candles in the group, which had slowly increased in numbers. These lights lit up the part of the room where the man in black was standing, his profile and fair and youthful countenance showed on the dark background with the clearness of an engraving or a coin. He was leaning with his shoulder against the panel of the door, and pressed his left hand to his brow, in an attitude of unconscious grace, which contrasted the breadth of his forehead with the smallness of his head. There was a look of deep suffering upon his compressed lips, as he watched and listened to all that was going on with the deepest attention. Those who formed the group, having recognized the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray, the rector, drew upon one side to permit of his passing, but he remained on the threshold. There was hesitation in his posture, but decision in his glance, which every now and then met that of *Déruchette*. Gilliatt, whether by chance or design, was standing in the shadow, and could only be seen indistinctly. Mess. Lethierry at first did not perceive the rector, but caught a glimpse of *Déruchette*. He went to her, kissed her fondly on the forehead, stretching out his hand at the same time to the dark corner where Gilliatt was standing.

Mess. Lethierry continued: "*Déruchette*, we are once more rich, and there is your future husband."

*Déruchette* raised her head in surprise, and peered into the dark corner.

Mess. Lethierry went on: "The marriage shall take place as soon as possible—to-morrow, if it can be arranged. We will get a licence; besides, here the formalities are not very trouble-

some; the Dean does as he likes. People are married before they have time to cry, 'Take care!' It is not like in France, where you are obliged to have banns, publications, notices, and all sorts of fuss; and you will be able to boast of being the wife of a brave man, and no one can say that he is not a thorough sailor. I knew he was that on the day I saw him come back from Herm, bringing the small cannon with him. And now he has returned from the Douvres, bringing back his fortune and mine, and that of the island as well. He is a man of whom the world will talk one day. Once you said 'I will marry him,' and marry him you shall; and you shall have children, and I shall be a grandfather, and you will have the good fortune to be the wife of an honest fellow, who can work and be useful to others—a seafaring man, worth a hundred others—a man who saves the inventions of others—a providence in himself. At any rate, you will not have married, like some of the wealthy girls about here, a soldier or a priest—that is to say, a man who kills or a man who lies. But, Gilliatt, what are you doing in that corner? No one can see you. Douce, Grace, all of you, bring lights. Light up my future son-in-law. My children, I betroth you to each other. Here is your husband, here is my son-in-law, Gilliatt, of the *Bû de la Rue*, a noble fellow and a thorough sailor. I will have no other son, and you no other husband, and once more I call God to witness my promise. 'Ah, you are there, reverend sir! You shall marry these young people for me?'

Mess. Lethierry had just caught sight of the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray.

Douce and Grace had obeyed orders, and two candles, placed, upon the table, lighted Gilliatt from head to foot.

"How handsome he looks!" said Mess. Lethierry. Gilliatt was simply hideous. He was in the same condition as he was when he sailed from the rock that morning. He was in rags and tatters, his bare elbows showing through his sleeves; his beard long, and his hair rough and unkempt; his eyes bloodshot, and the skin peeling from his face; his hands bleeding, and his feet bare. Some of the blisters left by the devil-fish were still visible upon his hairy arm.

Lethierry looked at him admiringly. "This is my true son-in-law," said he. How he has battled with the wave! He is all in rags. What shoulders! what hands! How handsome he looks!"

Grace ran to Déruchette and caught her in her arms, for she had fainted.



## THE WORKERS OF THE SEA.

### CHAPTER II.

#### THE LEATHER TRUNK.

FROM early dawn Saint Sampson was astir, and later on Saint Pierre Port began to arise. The resurrection of the *Durande* caused an excitement in the island similar to the commotion which was aroused in the South of France by the *Salette*. There was a dense crowd on the quay looking at the funnel rising from the boat. The crowd would have liked to examine and handle the engine, but Lethierry, after having made a fresh inspection by daylight, had placed beside it two sailors, as guards, to prevent anyone from approaching it, so that they had to be content with staring at the funnel. Gilliat's name was in every mouth. They commented on him, and, in using the nickname of "Artful," they wound up generally with this remark: "It is not agreeable to have people on the island who can do such things."

Mess. Lethierry could be seen from outside seated at his table writing, one eye on his letter and the other on the engine. He was so absorbed in his task that he only interrupted it once to call Douce, and inquire how Déruchette was getting on; and Douce had answered, "She has got up and gone out." To which Lethierry had replied, "She is quite right to get into the fresh air; she was knocked up last night on account of the heat of the room; there were too many people in it. Then there was her joy and surprise; besides, the windows were all closed. Ah! she will have a husband to be proud of." Then he bent over his paper again, and began writing. He had already composed and closed two letters to the best-known timber merchants at Brém, and was about to close the third, when the sound of a wheel on the quay made him raise his head. He bent forward, and saw a boy pushing a wheelbarrow in front of him, coming out of the path which led to the *Bû de la Rue*, and going in the direction of Saint Pierre Port. In the wheelbarrow was a yellow leather trunk, ornamented with brass and tin nails.

Mess. Lethierry called to the boy.

"Where are you going, my boy?"

The boy stopped, and replied,

"To the *Cashmere*."

"What to do?"

"To take this trunk on board."

"Well, then, take these three letters there, too," and, opening drawer, he took out a piece of string, tied the three letters

together, and threw them to the lad, who caught them in his two hands.

"Tell the captain that they are for Germany—Brême, *via* London."

"I shall not be able to speak to the captain."

"Why?"

"Because the *Cashmere* is not lying alongside of the quay."

"Indeed!"

"She is in the roads."

"Of course, on account of the tide."

"So that I shall only see the superintendent of cargo."

"Tell him about my letters."

"Yes, Mess. Lethierry."

"What time does the *Cashmere* sail?"

"At twelve o'clock."

"It will be high tide at noon, and it will be against her too."

"But the wind will be in her favour."

"Boy," said Mess. Lethierry, pointing with his finger to the funnel; "there is something there that is entirely independent of wind or tide."

The boy put the letters into his pocket, and continued on his way towards the town. Mess. Lethierry called, "Douce! Grace!" Grace half opened the door.

"What is it, Mess.?"

"Come in and wait a moment."

Mess. Lethierry took a sheet of paper and began writing. Had Grace been curious she could, from her position behind him, have read over his shoulder what he was writing.

"I have written to Brême for wood. I have appointments all day with carpenters for the estimates. The building will be pushed on as quickly as possible. You, on your side, had better go to the Dean about the licence. I wish the marriage to be solemnized as speedily as possible—the sooner the better. I am occupied with Durande, do you occupy yourself with Déruchette." He dated the note, and signed it "LETHIERRY." He did not take the trouble to seal this note, but simply folded it in four and handed it to Grace.

"Carry that to Gilliatt," said he.

"At the Bûe de la Rue?"

"At the Bûe de la Rue."

## BOOK III.

### *THE SAILING OF THE "CASHMERE"*

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE HAVEN NEAR THE CHURCH.

WHEN there is a crowd at Saint Sampson, Saint Pierre Port would be deserted. A point of anxiety at a certain place is like an air-pump. News travels quickly in small places. And it was everybody's business in Guernsey, since the rising of the sun, to go and see the funnel of the *Durande*, under Mess. Lethierry's window. Everything else was set aside for this. The death of the Dean of Saint Asaph had been entirely forgotten ; it was no longer a question of the Reverend Ebenezer Caudray, nor of his sudden accession to wealth, nor of his approaching departure in the *Cashmere*. The engine of the *Durande*, brought back from the Douvres, was the topic that engaged everyone's attention. People only half believed it. The shipwreck was strange enough, but the rescue appeared to be impossible, and therefore they must hasten, and satisfy themselves of the truth with their own eyes. Work of all kinds was stopped. Long lines of townsfolk, with their families, from the *Vesin* up to the *Mess.*, poured along the roads leading to Des Bravées, and turned their backs upon Saint Pierre Port. Many of the shops were closed. There was no business being done in the commercial Arcade ; all the attention of the population was fixed on the *Durande*. No shopkeeper had done any business that morning, except a jeweller, who was surprised at having sold a wedding-ring to a man who appeared to be in a great hurry, and asked where the Dean's house was. Those shops which remained open were converted into places where the wonderful salvage was discussed with the greatest excitement. There was no one walking on the *Hyvreuse*, which they have called now, without rhyme or reason, Cambridge Park ; no one in the High Street, called then the Grand Rue ; no one in Smith Street, known then as the Rue des Forges ; no one in Hauteville—the Esplanade itself was deserted. It looked like

Sunday. Had a prince of the blood come to inspect the militia at Ancresse, the town could not have been more completely emptied. And all this excitement about a man of no account, like Gilliatt, made serious people shrug their shoulders.

The church of Saint Pierre Port, with its three gable-ends placed side by side, its transept and its steeple, is situated by the side of the sea, almost at the place of disembarkation from the harbour. It gives a welcome to those who arrive, and a farewell to those who are leaving. It makes the capital letter of the long line which forms the part of the town facing the sea.

It is the parish church of Saint Pierre Port and the Deanery of the island. The rector is the surrogate of the bishop, and has full powers. The harbour of Saint Pierre Port, which is now a very fine and large one, was then smaller than that of Saint Sampson. It was enclosed by two Cyclopean walls, curved until their extremities almost met at the spot where stood the little white lighthouse. Underneath this lighthouse was the narrow entrance, having still the double rings for the chains, with which it used to be closed in the Middle Ages. In shape, it resembled the claw of a lobster half-open. This kind of pincer took a certain portion of water from the ocean, and compelled it to remain calm. But when the wind blew from the east, there was a chopping sea at the entrance, which rendered it wise to avoid running in to the harbour. It was on this account that the *Cashmere* was now lying in the roads.

When the wind is in the east, ships often adopt this plan, which, in addition, exempts them from port dues. On such occasions the boatmen—a hardy race of mariners, who have lost their business since the building of the new harbour—bring their boats either to the landing stage or to the shore, and take off passengers and baggage to the vessels lying outside—often through very heavy seas—and very rarely meet with an accident. The east wind blows off the shore, and is very favourable for vessels bound for England—it makes them roll, but not pitch. When the vessel lies alongside of the quay, every one embarks from these; but when she is in the roads, they can, if they choose, reach her from one of the points near her anchorage. In all the creeks boatmen are to be found willing enough to take passengers off.

The Havelet was one of these creeks. It was close to the town, but so lonely that you might, on finding yourself there, have imagined that you were at a long distance from it. It owed this solitude to the lofty cliffs of Fort Saint George, which overlooked

the little inlet. There were several paths leading to the Havelet; the most direct ran along the edge of the sea, and had the advantage of taking you either to the church or the town in five minutes, and the disadvantage of being under water twice in the course of the day. The other paths, more or less abrupt, led down to the Havelet through clefts in the rocks. Even in midday it lay in a sort of half light. Huge blocks overhung it on all sides, and thickets of bush and bramble cast a gentle shadow on the rocks and waters. Nothing could be more calm than this creek in fine weather, or more tumultuous in heavy seas. The ends of the branches were always, more or less, wet with foam. In spring-time it was ever full of flowers, of nuts, of perfumes, of birds, of butterflies, and bees. Thanks to recent improvements, this wild spot no longer exists; all has been smoothed away into straight lines. There are lines of masonry, quays, and little gardens now, and taste has done away with the wildness of the mountains, and corrected the irregularities of the rocks.

## CHAPTER II.

### DESPAIR MEETS DESPAIR.

It was a little before ten o'clock in the morning. To all appearance the crowd at Saint Sampson was on the increase. The people, half mad with curiosity, poured in from the northern extremity of the island, and the Havelet was more lonely than ever. But still there was one boat there with its attendant boatman, who seemed to be waiting for some one; in the boat was a travelling bag. In the roadstead the *Cashmere* could be seen lying at anchor; she was not to sail until midday, and so there was no move on board. A passer-by on one of the steep cliff paths would have caught the murmur of voices in the Havelet, and had he bent down and looked over the edge, he might have seen, at some distance from the boat, in a nook in the rocks, so screened by the branches of trees and the bushes that the eyes of the boatman could not penetrate inside, two persons, a man and a woman—Ebenezer and Déruchette.

These solitary retreats, so often chosen by female bathers, are not always so private as they are imagined to be. Very often there are unseen spectators and listeners. Those who take refuge in them may easily be followed, owing to the density of the undergrowth, and, thanks to the winding of the paths, the

rocks and trees which conceal an interview may do the same for the witness of it. Déruchette and Ebenezer were standing together, face to face, their eyes fixed on each other, their hands united in one loving clasp. Déruchette was talking, Ebenezer was silent; a tear stood in his eye, but, retained by the lash, did not fall.

Grief and passion were strongly marked upon his face. An agonized resignation was visible there, too—a resignation hostile to his creed, though it emanated from it. On that face, which before had been like the face of an angel, was beginning to appear an expression of fatalism. He who, up to this time, had thought of nothing but doctrines, was now beginning to meditate upon destiny—an unhealthy subject for a priest. Faith soon fades away under it. Nothing is more dangerous to the mind than to have to bend to the Unknown. Something always appears to be happening in our lives, to which we have to submit. We never know from what direction the blow will come that chance is preparing for us. Happiness and sorrow enter, the one as unexpected as the other. They have their law, their orbit, and their gravitation apart from the rules of mankind. Virtue no more brings happiness, than crime misfortune. Conscience has one kind of reasoning, destiny another, and neither agree with the other. Nothing can be learned from anticipation. We live as we can, and from day to day. Conscience is a straight line, life a storm. This storm hurls, indiscriminately, on the heads of men the black cloud or the bright-blue sky. Fate does not work in a gradual manner. Sometimes the wheel turns round so swiftly that we can hardly distinguish the revolution of to-day from that of yesterday. Ebenezer was a believer, but faith did not bar him from using his reasoning powers, nor did his training close the door to earthly passion. Those religions which enforce celibacy upon their priests have good reason for what they ordain. The priest who loves a woman has lost his individuality as a priest. Dark clouds were gathering over Ebenezer's head.

He gazed ardently on Déruchette.

These two idolised each other.

In Ebenezer's eyes there was the mute adoration of despair.

Déruchette was saying, "You shall not go. I have not got the strength. I thought that I could say farewell to you, but I cannot do so. We cannot be compelled to do what is impossible. Why did you come yesterday? You should not have come if you were going away so soon. I had never spoken to you. I loved

you without knowing it. When Mr. Hérode, the first time that I saw you, read the history of Rebecca, and our eyes met, I felt my cheeks burn, and I thought, 'Oh, how Rebecca must have blushed!' But yet, if anyone had told me yesterday that I loved the rector, I should have laughed. There is something terrible in love like this. It seems like a kind of treason. I took no heed of it. I went to church, I saw you, and I thought that my feelings were the same as those of others. I do not blame you. You have not striven to make me love you; you took no trouble; you simply looked at me—and it is not your fault if you look at people—and yet it made me love you. When you took up your book it was like a ray of light; when others took it, it remained a mere book. Sometimes your eyes met mine. You spoke of archangels—you were my archangel. I used to ponder over what you said. Before I heard you, I do not even know if I believed in a God. Since our first meeting I have prayed regularly. I used to say to Douce, 'Dress me quickly, so that I may not be late for service,' and then I would run off to church. And this is what it is to love a man. I did not know it before. How religious I became! but it is you that have taught me that I did not go to church for God, but for your sake. I did go for you, is it not true? You are beautiful; you speak so well. When you raise your arms towards heaven, it seems to me that you lift up my heart in your white hands. I was mad, but I was ignorant of the reason. Shall I tell you where you did wrong?—it was for coming into the garden yesterday evening, and for having spoken to me. Had you said nothing, I should have known nothing. You would have gone away, and I should, perhaps, have been very sad, but now I shall die. Now that I know I love you, it is impossible for you to leave me. What are you thinking of? You do not seem to be listening to me."

Ebenezer answered:

"You heard what was said yesterday?"

"Alas! yes."

"What can I do, then?"

They were both silent for a moment, and then Ebenezer continued: "There is but one thing for me to do, and that is to leave."

"And but one thing for me—to die. Oh, how I wish that there were no sea, but only the sky! It seems as if that would settle all, and that our departure would be the same. You were wrong to speak. Ah! why did you do so? You must not go. What will become of me? I tell you I shall die; when you see

far away I shall be lying cold and stiff in my grave. My heart is broken. I am very unhappy; and yet my uncle does not mean to be unkind."

It was the first time in her life that Déruchette, in speaking of Mess. Lethierry, called him *uncle*. Before she had always spoken of him as *father*.

Ebenezer stepped backwards, and made a sign to the boatman. The sound of the beat-hook was heard on the pebbly beach, and the step of a man on the gunwhale of the boat.

"No, no!" cried Déruchette.

"Déruchette, it must be so."

"No, never, I tell you, and for an engine! Can such things be possible? Did you see that horrible man? You cannot leave me to him. You are so clever, surely you can devise some plan! It is not possible that you can have met me here solely for the purpose of telling me that you were going to leave me. What have I ever done to you that you should treat me thus? Surely you have no cause of complaint against me. Is that the ship in which you are going? You shall not go; you must not leave me! Heaven does not open to close again at once. I say that you shall remain with me! Besides, it is not yet time. Ah! how I love you!" and, throwing herself into his arms, she crossed her ten fingers behind his neck, as if endeavouring to make with her arms a band to restrain him, and with her hands a supplication to heaven. He unloosed her gentle clasp, Déruchette resisting as long as she was able. Déruchette sank back in a sitting posture on an ivy-covered stone, raising, with a mechanical gesture, her arms, from which the sleeves slipped back, showing her rounded arms bare to the elbow, with a pale, suffused light in her eyes. The boat came nearer.

Ebenezer took her head between his two hands. The maid had the air of a young widow; the man seemed to have aged terribly. He touched her hair with a sort of holy reverence, and fixed his gaze upon her for some moments; then he pressed upon her forehead one of those kisses which seem like the upheaval of a life, and, in accents trembling with all the agony beneath which his soul was quivering, he uttered that saddest of all words—"Farewell!"

Déruchette burst into sobs of anguish.

At that instant they heard behind them a grave, soft voice, which said:

"Why should not you two get married?"

Ebenezer turned his head, Déruchette lifted her eyes.



Gilliatt stood before them.

He had come down by one of the side paths.

Gilliatt did not present the same appearance that he had done the evening before. He had combed his hair and shaved himself. He had on a pair of shoes and a white shirt, with a turn-down collar, and his newest suit of sailors' clothes. A golden ring shone on his little finger. He seemed perfectly calm, but his face was livid; it was of a sickly bronze colour.

They looked upon him in stupefied astonishment. Although he was hardly recognisable, Déruchette knew him in a moment. As for the words he had uttered, they were so different from those that they had expected to hear, that they had passed by unnoticed.

Gilliatt repeated: "What need have you to say farewell? Get married, and leave this place together."

Déruchette quivered from head to foot.

Gilliatt went on: "Miss Déruchette is twenty-one years of age. She is her own mistress. Her uncle is only her uncle, after all. You love each other."

Déruchette interrupted him. "How came you here?" asked she, gently.

"Get married!" urged Gilliatt.

Déruchette began to understand what he meant, and stammered out: "My poor uncle——!"

"If the marriage depended upon his consent, he would refuse it," said Gilliatt; "when it is over he can do nothing. Besides, you are going away; when you return, all will be forgiven;" then, with a slight touch of bitterness, he added, "Then, just now, all he cares about is rebuilding his boat. This will occupy him during your absence—the *Durande* will console him."

"I cannot consent," murmured Déruchette, in a state of bewilderment, in which there was a strong element of joy, "to leave him in trouble about me."

"It will not last long," answered Gilliatt.

Ebenezer and Déruchette were in a sort of dazed condition, but now they were recovering themselves.

The meaning of Gilliatt's words grew clearer as their astonishment disappeared. There was still a small cloud before them, but it was not their part to offer opposition. We submit to those who come to preserve us. Objections to return to Eden are never maintained for long. There was something in Déruchette's attitude, as she leaned upon Ebenezer, that seemed to make common cause with Gilliatt's words. As for the reason

Gilliatt's strange and sudden appearance, and the advice that he had given, these were questions entirely apart from the main issue. The man had said, "Be man and wife." This was quite clear; if there was any responsibility it would rest upon him. Déruchette had a sort of confused notion that, for many reasons, he had the right to say what he had done. What he said of Mess. Lethierry was perfectly correct. Ebenezer murmured, pensively, "An uncle is not a father." He was yielding to the influence of a sudden and happy change in his ideas. The scruples of the priest vanished and melted away in the strong, amorphous passion of his soul.

Gilliatt's tones became abrupt and harsh, and like the pulsations of fever. "It must be done at once," said he. "The *Cashmere* sails in two hours. You have time, but only just enough. Come!"

Ebenezer looked at him carefully, and suddenly exclaimed: "I know you now; it was you who saved my life!"

Gilliatt answered, "I think not."

"There, at the end of the Banques."

"I do not know the spot."

"It was on the day I came here."

"Let us lose no further time," said Gilliatt.

"If I am not in error, you are the man we saw last night."

"Perhaps so."

"What is your name?"

Gilliatt raised his voice. "Boatman, wait there for us; we shall soon be back. You asked me, Miss Lethierry, how I happened to be here. The answer is a simple one: I followed you. You are one-and-twenty. In this country, when persons have attained their majority, they may marry at once. Let us take the path by the water's edge. We can get along it for the tide does not come in until noon. But let us lose no time; come with me."

Déruchette and Ebenezer consulted each other by a look. They were standing close together, perfectly motionless. They were intoxicated with delight. People sometimes were drawn back from the edge of the ocean of happiness,

"His name is Gilliatt," whispered Déruchette to her lover.

Gilliatt now spoke with an air of authority.

"Why do you delay? I told you to come with me."

"Where?" asked the priest.

"There," replied Gilliatt pointing to the church.

Gilliatt went on in advance; his step was firm, but they moved ~~un~~steadily.

As they approached the church, an expression dawned upon those two young and beautiful countenances, which soon ripened into a smile. The proximity of the church made them happy. In the hollow eyes of Gilliatt there was the gloom of night.

The spectator might have imagined that he saw a spectre conducting two souls to Paradise. Ebenezer and Déruchette hardly paid attention to what had occurred. The unexpected intervention of Gilliatt was like the branch of a tree extended to a drowning person. She clung to him with all the docility of despair, leaning on the first who had come to them as a friend in their anguish. Those who are prepared for death do not hesitate to accept interposition of a favourable nature. Déruchette, as the least experienced, was most confident. Ebenezer was buried in thought. Déruchette was certainly not a minor. The formalities of the English law of marriage are very simple, especially in places where the rector has a discretionary power; but would the Dean consent to celebrate the marriage without asking for the uncle's consent? This was the question. Nevertheless, they could find out this; at any rate, it would give them a brief delay. But who was this man? And if it was really he who Mess. Lethierry, the evening before, had designated as his future son-in-law, what could be the meaning of the part that he was now playing? The obstacle had been transferred into a providence. Ebenezer yielded, but his very yielding was only the rapid and silent submission of a man who feels himself rescued from the depths of despair. The path they were treading was uneven and wet, and difficult to pass. Ebenezer, buried in his thoughts, did not notice the occasional pools of water or heaps of shingle. But every now and then Gilliatt would turn, and say: "Take care of those stones; give her your hand."

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE FORETHOUGHT OF SELF-SACRIFICE.

It was half-past ten as they entered the church. On account of the time, and also because the town was empty, there were no strangers in the church. At the end, however, near the altar, were three persons—the Dean, his clerk, and the registrar. The Dean, who was the Reverend Jaquemin Hérode, was seated; the clerk and the registrar were standing.

A book was open on the table.

On one side, on a Credence table, was another book—the Parish Register—also open, and in which an attentive eye could have remarked a page upon which the ink was not yet dry. A pen and an inkstand were by the side of the register.

Upon seeing the Rev. Ebenezer Caudray enter, the Rev. Jacquemin Hérode got up.

“I have been expecting you,” said he; “all is ready.”

The Dean, in fact, had on his robes.

Ebenezer glanced at Gilliatt.

The Rev. Dean added, with a bow, “I am entirely at your service, brother.”

The bow was given straight to the front, with no inclination either to the right or to the left, and was evidently meant for Ebenezer alone, who was a gentleman and a clergyman, and did not include Déruchette who stood on one side; or Gilliatt, who was in the background. The maintenance of these bonds of intellect keep up social etiquette, and consolidate the forms of society.

The Dean continued, with an air of graceful and dignified urbanity, “My brother, I offer you my congratulations of a double nature. Your uncle is dead, and you are about to be married. One event will make you wealthy, and the other happy. In addition, owing to the rescue of the engine, Miss Lethierry will also be rich, which is correct and right. Miss Lethierry, I see, was born in this parish, and I have verified her birth from the register. Miss Lethierry also is of full age; besides, her uncle who represents her family, has given his consent. You wish to be married at once, on account of your immediate departure. I understand all this; but as this is the marriage of the rector of the parish, I should have been pleased to have seen it performed in a more ceremonious manner. But, for your sake, I will waive any objections that I may have. The entry is already made in the register, and the names only remains to be filled in. By law and custom, the marriage may be solemnized immediately after the inscription. The declaration has been duly made. I take upon myself the responsibility of one slight irregularity: the application for the license should have been made seven days ago, but I yield to circumstances, and to the necessity for your departure. I shall now proceed with the ceremony. My clerk will act as your witness; with regard to the other——” The Dean turned to Gilliatt, who nodded.

“That will be sufficient,” said the Dean.

Ebenezer remained motionless; Déruchette was paralyzed with ecstasy.

The Dean continued: "I regret that there is one more obstacle: the agent of Mess. Lethierry, who, having been sent to apply for the licence, required for the registry" (here he pointed with the thumb of his left hand to spare himself from mentioning Gilliatt by name). "This agent informed me that Mess. Lethierry was too much engaged to attend in person, but desired that the ceremony should be performed at once. This verbal request, however, is insufficient. In consequence of my having to grant the licence, and of the irregularity in so doing, for which I hold myself responsible, I cannot proceed without informing myself personally from Mess. Lethierry, unless some one can produce his signature to this request. However anxious I may be to serve you I cannot act on a mere verbal message. I must have some written document."

"Let there be no delay on that account," said Gilliatt, and he presented a paper to the Dean. The Dean took it, read it through, passing over some lines as having nothing to do with the subject in hand, and then read aloud: "Go to the Dean for the licence; I wish the marriage to be solemnized as speedily as possible—the sooner the better." He placed the letter on the table and proceeded: "It is signed 'Lethierry.' It would have been more respectful to have addressed it to me; but, since I am called on to assist a colleague, I will make no further objections."

Ebenezer glanced again at Gilliatt. There is such a thing as the mutual understanding of souls; he felt that there was some deception under all this, but he had not the courage or, perhaps, even the wish to denounce it. Whether in obedience to a latent heroism, of which he began to catch a glimpse; or whether from a dulling of his perceptions of right and wrong, he remained silent.

The Dean took up the pen and filled in the blanks, with the assistance of the registrar; then he drew himself up, and beckoned to Ebenezer and Déruchette to approach the altar.

The ceremony commenced.

It was a strange period of time.

Ebenezer and Déruchette were side by side before the clergyman. Whoever has dreamed that he has been married can appreciate their feelings.

Gilliatt was some distance behind, in the shade of the pillar. When Déruchette arose that morning, with her thoughts dwell-

ing upon death and the winding-sheet, she had dressed herself in white. Her idea of mourning made her dress suitable for a marriage. All that a bride requires is a white dress. The tomb is also a species of betrothal. There was a bright smile upon her face. Never had she appeared more beautiful than at that moment. She had the fault that her features were pretty rather than beautiful. If there *was* a fault to be found with her, it was in her excess of grace. In repose—that is when disturbed by neither grief or passion—she was grace itself. The transfiguration of a charming girl is the ideal virgin. Déruchette, refined by her sorrow and her love, seemed to have caught a loftier and more noble expression of countenance. She had the same look of simplicity, with more dignity; the same freshness with more of the perfume of the woman. She was a daisy changing into a lily.

The tears were scarcely yet dry upon her cheeks; perhaps some still remained. Half-dried tears are, at the same time, a sweet and sad ornament.

The Dean, with his finger between the leaves of his Bible, asked, in a loud voice:—

“Is there any impediment to this marriage?”

There was no reply.

“Amen,” said the Dean.

Ebenezer and Déruchette advanced a step towards the Rev. Jaquemin Hérode, who said, “Joë Ebenezer Caudray, do you take this woman for your wife?”

Ebenezer answered, “I do.”

The Dean continued: “Durande Déruchette Lethierry, will you have this man for your husband?”

Déruchette, a prey to the most poignant emotion, murmured rather than spoke the words, “I will.”

Then, according to the beautiful ritual of the Anglican rite of marriage, the Dean looked round the gloomy church and asked, “Who gives this woman to this man?”

“I do!” answered Gilliatt.

There was a pause; Ebenezer and Déruchette felt a vague shadow fall across their joy.

The Dean placed the right hand of Déruchette in the right hand of Ebenezer, and made him repeat after him:

“Déruchette, I take thee to be my wedded wife, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part, and I plight you my troth thereto.”

The Dean then placed Ebenezer's hand in that of Déruchette, and she said after him :

"I take thee, Ebenezer, for my husband, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness or in health, to love you and obey you until death do us part, and I pledge you my troth thereto."

The Dean continued : "Where is the ring ?"

This took them by surprise ; Ebenezer had no ring. Gilliatt took off the gold ring that he had purchased that morning from the jeweller in the Commercial Arcade, and handed it to the Dean, who placed it upon the open book, and then handed it to Ebenezer. The latter took the little trembling hand and put the ring on to the fourth finger, and said : "With this ring I thee wed."

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," said the Dean.

"So be it," repeated the clerk.

The Dean raised his voice, "I pronounce you man and wife."

"So be it," repeated the clerk.

The Dean continued : "Let us pray."

Ebenezer and Déruchette fell upon their knees.

Gilliatt stood aloof with his head bent down. And thus they kneeled before the God who held their destinies in His hands, whilst he seemed to bend beneath the cruel hand of Fate.

## CHAPTER IV.

### FOR YOUR WIFE WHEN YOU GET MARRIED.

As they left the church they saw the *Cashmere* preparing to get under weigh.

"You are in time," said Gilliatt.

They took the road to the Havelet. Now the newly-married pair went on first, and Gilliatt followed behind. They were like persons walking in their sleep. Their bewilderment had only changed its form ; they took no heed where they were going, or what they did. They hurried on mechanically, hardly realising the existence of anything. They felt that they belonged to each other, and could hardly believe in the truth of the fact. When the mind is so filled with happiness, it is as impossible to think as to stem a current. In the midst of the gloom of misery they had been plunged into a Niagara of joy. They carried in their hearts the

happiness of their own peculiar Paradise. They uttered no words, but their souls communicated with each other. Déruchette pressed Ebenezer's arm to her side. The sound of Gilliatt's footsteps behind reminded them sometimes that he was there. They were deeply moved, but could find no words in which to express themselves. Too much happiness brings about a feeling of stupor. Their state was one of perfect delight, but, at the same time, full of bewilderment. They were married; every other consideration was put on one side. Gilliatt had acted nobly—their ideas did not go beyond that. Those two hearts thanked him vaguely, but tenderly, from their inmost recesses. Déruchette felt that there was some mystery to be solved, but later on. Meanwhile, they accepted everything. They felt that they were controlled by this man so decisive and abrupt, who, with so authoritative an air, conferred happiness on them. The little power of thought which they retained was just sufficient to show them where to place their feet on the way back. Beneath the wave there are portions of the sponge that always remain white. They had just that amount of lucidity to enable them to distinguish the sea from the land, and the *Cashmere* from other vessels.

In a few minutes they were at the Havelet. Ebenezer entered the boat first. At the moment when Déruchette was about to follow him, she felt her sleeve pulled gently. It was Gilliatt who had placed his finger on the fold of her dress. "Madame!" said he, "you did not expect to set out upon the journey on which you are starting; it has struck me that you will need dresses and linen. You will find a trunk on board the *Cashmere* containing ladies' clothing. It came to me from my mother, and was intended for my wife, should I ever marry. Allow me to offer it to you."

Déruchette partially aroused from her dream, turned towards him. Gilliatt continued in a low voice, scarcely audible: "I do not wish to detain you, madam, but feel that some explanation is due to you. On the day of the catastrophe, you were seated in the room on the ground-floor, and you then made use of certain words. You have forgotten them, as it is easy to perceive. We are not forced to remember every word we speak. Mess. Lethierry was in great sorrow. It was certainly a fine vessel, and one that had done good service. A misfortune had happened, and there was much excitement in the place. These are things that we naturally forget. It was only a vessel that had run upon the rocks, and we cannot always be thinking of



an accident. But I only wished to say to you that, as they asserted no one would go, I went. They said it was impossible; but it was not that which was impossible. I thank you for listening to me a moment. You can understand, madam, that if I went there, it was not with the idea of displeasing you. Besides, the thing dates far back. I know that time presses. If there was time to talk the matter over, you might, perhaps, remember something; but it is useless now. The story goes back to a day when there was snow upon the ground; and on one occasion when I passed by you, I fancied that you smiled on me. This is how the whole affair can be explained. With reference to last night, I had not had time to return home, I came straight from my toil, torn and ragged. You were frightened, and swooned. It was my fault. People do not come in such guise to the houses of strangers, and I ask your pardon. This is nearly all that I have to say. You will sail directly. You will have a fine passage. The wind is in the east. Farewell, madam; you will not think it wrong of me to have spoken to you. This is our last minute."

"I am thinking of the trunk you spoke of," said Déruchette. "Why do you not keep it for your wife when you marry?"

"Madame!" replied Gilliatt, "it is most likely that I shall never marry."

"That will be a pity," answered Déruchette, "for you are so good." As she spoke, she smiled, and Gilliatt returned it.

Then he assisted her to enter the boat. In less than a quarter of an hour the boat, in which Ebenezer and Déruchette were, was alongside the *Cashmere* in the roads."

## CHAPTER V.

### THE GREAT TOMB.

GILLIATT walked along the waterside, and passed rapidly through Saint Pierre Port in the direction of Saint Sampson, by the seashore, concealing himself as best he could from passers-by, by avoiding the main roads, which were full of people anxious to see the work that he had accomplished. He had always a habit, as the reader is aware, of passing through the neighbourhood without being seen. He knew all the by-ways, and preferred lonely and devious road; he had the instincts of a wild animal, which knows that it is not liked, and conceals

itself as much as possible. Even when a child, he had read ~~this~~ feeling of aversion for him in men's faces, and had chosen from the beginning to hold himself apart from them. He passed the Esplanade, then the Salerie, but, from time to time, he glanced over his shoulder at the roadstead, in which was the *Cashmere*, preparing to set sail. There was very little wind, and Gilliatt was making more way than she was. He walked along the rocks at the extreme edge of the sea, with his head sunk upon his breast. The tide was beginning to rise. Suddenly he stepped, turned his back to the sea, and for some minutes gazed upon a group of oaks in the road to Valle. It was there that the finger of Déruchette had written the name of Gilliatt in the snow. That snow had long since disappeared.

He continued on his way.

The day was the most beautiful that had been seen that year. There was something in the morning that recalled the sound of marriage bells. It was one of those spring mornings when May pour forth all her gifts. Nature seemed to have no other design but to give herself up to enjoyment and happiness. There was a gentle murmur of satisfaction in the wood, as in the village; in the wave, as on the heavens. The early butterflies hovered over the first roses of the coming summer. Everything in Nature was fresh—the berries, the grass, the moss, the sweet odours, and the sunbeams. It seemed as if the sun had never shone so brightly. The pebbles on the shore appeared to be bathed in freshness. The deep rythm of the forest was sung by a thousand tuneful throats, as the newly-fledged birds fluttered amongst the hedges, trying their wings for the first time. There was a gentle chirruping in various-mingled notes at the same moment—goldfinches, linnets, tomtits, woodpeckers, bullfinches, and thrushes, all united in one long hymn of praise. The blossoms of the lilac, the lilies, and daphnes, mingled their various hues in the undergrowth.

A lovely aquatic plant, much found in Guernsey, coated the pools with a vivid emerald, where the water-wagtails and the kingfishers come down to dip their wings in the waters. Through the trellis of the branches the blue heavens could be seen far above. Some idle clouds wandered across the firmament; the ear seemed to catch the sound of kisses given by invisible lips. There was not an old wall without its tuft of wallflower. The plum-trees and the laburnums were in bloom, and their white and yellow blossoms gleamed through the interlacements of the boughs. The spring showered all her gold and silver.

upon the woods. The new leaves and shoots were all fresh and green. The air was full of invitation and welcome, and the approaching summer opened her doors to the birds who came from far-distant lands. It was the season for the coming of the swallows. The clumps of furze-bushes dotted the precipitous sides of the roads, until the clusters of the hawthorn should replace them. The pretty and the beautiful sat side by side; the magnificent and the graceful, the great and the little, each had their appointed place. In the great concert of Nature, not a note was wasted. Green microscopic beauties were visible in the vast place, in which all was as clearly to be seen as in a lake of limpid water. Everywhere there was a heavenly fullness—a sense of the most voluptuous expansion, suggested by the unseen effect of the sap to rise. Bright things grew still brighter; loving hearts grew more impassioned. There was a song of rejoicing in the flowers, an outburst of brilliancy in the sounds of the atmosphere. The widely-diffused harmony of Nature rang out all around. Everything which felt within it the dawn of life invited something else to put forth its shoots. The blossom gave vague promise of the coming fruit. Young virgins dreamed of love and happiness. It was the divine nuptials of Nature. The weather was fine, bright, and warm; children played and sported in the meadows, their silvery laughter ringing through the hedgerows. The orchards were full of fruit trees with their wealth of bud and white blossom. The fields were studded with primroses, cowslips, daffodils, daisies, jacinths, and violets. Blue borage and yellow iris were there. Insects, sheathed in golden scales, crawled between the pebbles. The flowering houseleek covered the thatched roofs of the cottages with their lustre of purple patches. Women were plaiting the straw-roofs for hives at their cottage doors. The bees were busy at their work, and the air was full of the soft murmur of the sea and the hum of insects. When Gilliatt arrived at Saint Sampson, the tide had not yet reached the lower end of the harbour, and he was able to cross it dry-shod, concealing himself from observation behind the hulls of the vessels undergoing repairs. A number of flat stones had been placed there to form a causeway. No one noticed him. The crowd was at the other end, nearer to Les Bravées. They were all talking of him, so much so that no one noticed him; and he passed, favoured by the very commotion that he had caused. He could see, from afar off, his boat in the place where he had moored it: with the funnel supported by its four chains. He

could see a movement of carpenters at work, and confused outlines of figures passing to and fro, and he could plainly hear the sonorous and joyful voice of Mess. Lethierry giving his orders. He passed through the narrow alleys behind Les Bravées. There was no one there except himself. Everyone was occupied at the front of the house. He took the path that led by the low wall of the garden, but stopped at the angle where the wild mallow grew. He saw once more the stone upon which he had sat; he saw again the bench upon which Deruchette was accustomed to rest, and glanced for a last moment at the place where he had seen the two shadows embrace and disappear.

He continued his way, and, climbing the hill of the Chateau de Vallo, he descended again and made his way to the Bû de la Rue. The Houmet-Paradis was in perfect solitude. His house was in the same state that he had left it in, after he had dressed that morning to go to Saint Pierre Port. A window in it was open. Through it he could see his bagpipes hung upon the wall. On the table was the Bible, given him by the man whose life he had saved—Ebenezer Caudray.

The key was in the door. Gilliatt approached, locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and turned his back on the house. He did not go towards the land, but towards the sea.

He passed through his garden the shortest way, taking no heed of the beds, only avoiding treading upon the seakale, which he had planted when he heard that Déruchette liked it. He climbed over the parapet, and let himself down on the rocks. He followed—always going straight ahead—the long line of reefs which connected the Bû de la Rue with that lofty granite pillar, which was called the Horn of the Beast, and in which was the chair of Gild-Holm-'Ur. He leapt from one rock to another, like a giant on the hills. To take long strides on such a path is like walking on the parapet of a roof. A fisherwoman, who was paddling in the pools with naked feet, and making for the shore, cried out to him: "Take care; the tide is coming in!"

But he continued to advance.

Arrived at length at the tall rock—the Horn—which rises from the sea like a pinnacle, he stopped. The land had finished; he was at the extreme end of the point.

He looked round him.

In the open sea some fishing-boats were at anchor with their nets out. Every now and then there was a sparkle of silver in the sunbeams, as the water rushed through the meshes of the

nets when they were drawn up. The *Cashmere* had not got as far as Saint Sampson. She had set her maintopsail, and was between Herm and Jethon.

Gilliatt turned towards the rock. He was just under the Chair of Gild-Holm-'Ur, at the foot of that rude staircase which he had assisted Ebenezer to descend three months before. He clambered up it.

Most of the steps were already under water. Two or three only were dry; he ascended them. These brought him to the Gild-Holm-'Ur. He reached the Chair, gazed upon it for a moment, pressed his hand to his eyes, and then gently passed it across them, meaning by this gesture to wipe away the past. Then he sat down in the hollow of the rock, with the perpendicular wall behind him, and the ocean at his feet.

At that moment the *Cashmere* was passing the great round tower, half submerged in the sea, which, defended by one sergeant and a gun, guards the roadstead between Herm and Saint Pierre Port. There were a few flowers in the crevices of the rock above Gilliatt's head, which stirred in the breeze.

As far as the eye could reach, the sea was of a deep blue. The wind was in the east. There was a little surf in the direction of Sark, the western side of which alone is visible from Guernsey.

France stretched out like a cloud on the horizon, and the long yellow strip of the sands of Carteret were plainly visible. Every now and then a white butterfly passed. Butterflies are often found a little way out at sea. The breeze was very light. The blue sea was as motionless as the blue sky. Not a ripple agitated those species of serpentine waves, of light and of dark-blue colour, which mark on the surface of the ocean the latent forces of the currents beneath.

The *Cashmere* was hardly moved by the wind, and had, in order to catch the breeze, set her topsail and studding-sails, and was now a mass of canvas. But the wind was a side breeze, and her studding-sails forced her to hug the shore of Guernsey pretty closely. She had passed the beacon of Saint Sampson now, and reached the little hill of the Chateau de Valle; and the moment had arrived when she would double the point upon which stood the Rû de la Rue.

Gilliatt watched her coming up.

The wind and the wave seemed to slumber. The tide was coming up, not in a wave, but in a gentle swelling of the sea.

The soft murmur of the ocean was like the light breathing of a child.

The *Cashmere* came nearer, with the slowness of a phantom. Gilliatt waited for her.

All of a sudden there was a ripple, and he felt a sensation of cold to his feet; he glanced down, the sea had reached them.

He kept his eyes lowered for a moment, and then he raised them again.

The *Cashmere* was quite close.

The rock, in which the rains had hollowed out the seat in which Gilliatt sat, was so perpendicular, and the water around it was so deep, that ships could come close to it in calm weather without any danger.

The *Cashmere* came on; she seemed to increase in size—to grow out of the water. It was like the sudden extension of a shadow. The rigging stood out in relief against the sky and the wide-spreading ocean. The sails, with the sun behind them, became of a pink hue, and, for a few moments, were almost transparent. The waves murmured softly. Not a sound betrayed the progress of the peaceful outline that rode the waves. Her decks were plainly visible. The steersman was at the helm—a boy was climbing the shrouds—some of the passengers were leaning on the bulwarks enjoying the beauty of the weather—the captain was smoking. But these were not the objects upon which Gilliatt's eyes were fixed. On the deck was one little nook, bathed in a flood of bright sunlight. It was there that he was looking. There Ebenezer and Déruchette were seated close together, like two birds warming themselves in the same sunbeam.

They had taken possession of one of those seats with a tarpaulin cover, which well-equipped vessels provide for the accommodation of their passengers, and upon which an inscription can be read, when the boat is an English one—"For ladies only." Déruchette's head was reclining on Ebenezer's shoulder, and his arm was round her waist; their hands were clasped, and their fingers interlaced. A heavenly expression—the result of innocent love—was apparent on their faces. The one was full of virginal candour, the other of divine tenderness—all was shadowed forth in that chaste embrace.

Love and marriage was there, but modesty was not absent. The seat was already an alcove—almost a nest. There was a glory overhanging them—a halo of love flying from the passing cloud. The silence was divine.

Ebenezer's eyes were fixed in calm contemplation; Déruchette's lips moved, and, in that perfect silence, as the wind bore the *Cashmere* within a few fathoms of the rock, Gilliatt could hear Déruchette's soft and gentle voice exclaim, "Look! Does it not seem as if there was a man on the rock?"

The apparition passed away.

The *Cashmere* left the promontory of the Bû de la Rue behind it, and glided further out to sea. In less than a quarter-of-an-hour her towering canvas was only a sort of white monument on the horizon, gradually growing less and less. The water had reached Gilliatt's knees.

He looked at the sloop growing smaller and smaller in the distance.

Out at sea the breeze freshened; he could see the *Cashmere* hoist her lower studding-sails and her staysails to take advantage of the wind. She was already out of Guernsey waters, but Gilliatt's eyes never quitted her.

The wave had reached his waist.

The tide was rising, and the time passing away.

The seagulls and the cormorants flew round him with uneasy cries. It seemed as if they wished to warn him. Perhaps, amongst those birds there was some gull from the Douvres that had recognised him.

An hour passed away.

The wind from the sea was hardly felt in the roads, but the *Cashmere* was getting out of sight. She had evidently plenty of way on her, and was nearly off the Caskets.

There was no surf round the base of the rock of Gild-Holm-Ur, no wave dashed against its granite face. The water rose up quietly. It had almost reached Gilliatt's shoulders.

Another hour elapsed.

The *Cashmere* had passed Aurigny, and, for a moment, the Rock of Ortach hid her from view. She was steering due north, and rapidly gaining the open sea. She was now little more than a speck glittering in the sun.

The birds continued to scream wildly round Gilliatt.

His head only was now visible.

The sea was rising with sinister gentleness.

Gilliatt, still motionless, watched the disappearance of the *Cashmere*.

The tide was almost at its full, and the evening was approaching. Behind him, in the roads, a few fishing boats were making for the harbour.







